The MOON CYCLE COOKBOOK

A Holistic Nutrition Guide for A WELL-BALANCED MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Devon Loftus & Jenna Radomski, MScN
of Moon Cycle Bakery

Foreword by Katie Lemons

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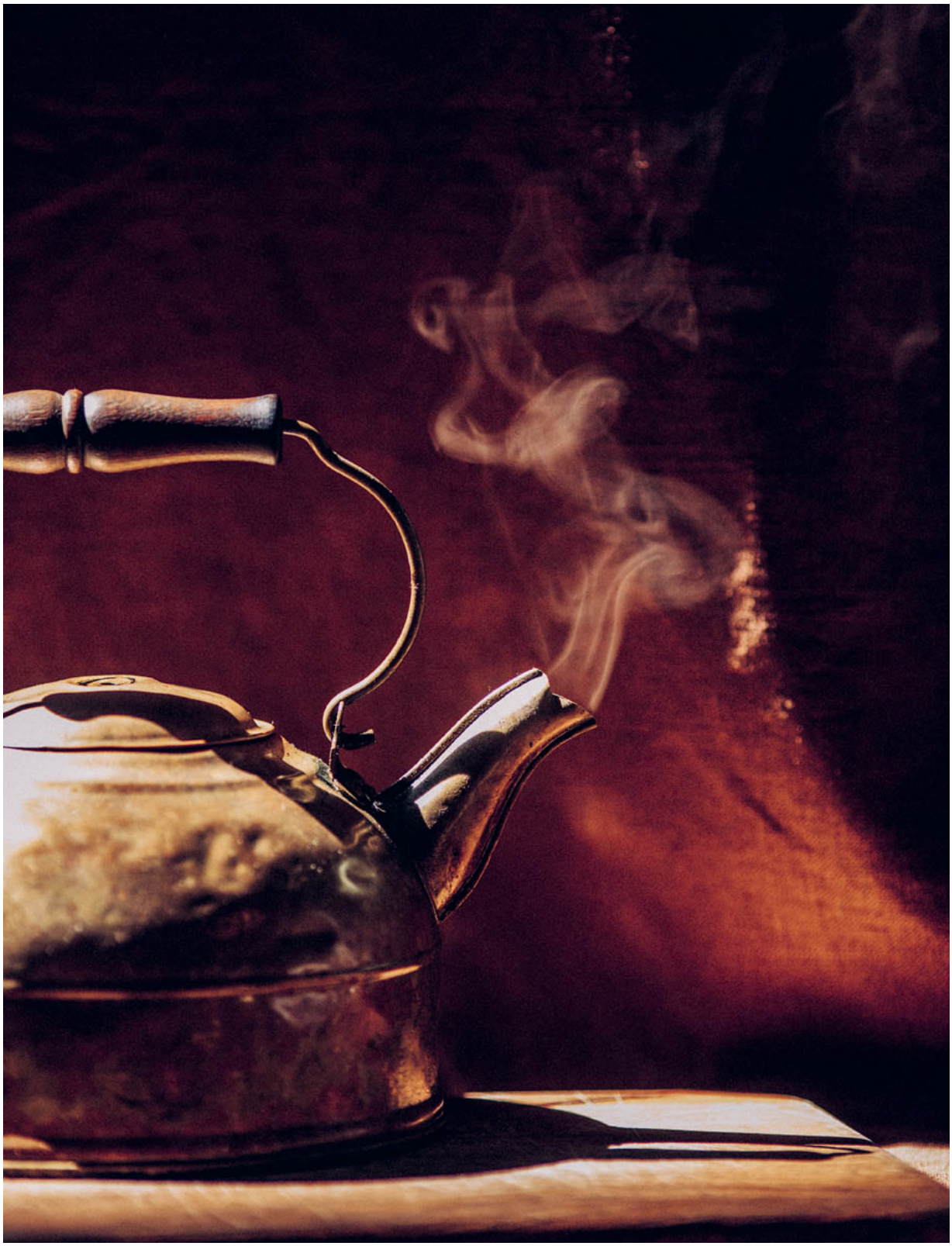

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Devon Loftus &
Jenna Radomski, MSCN

Foreword by Katie Lemons

Photos by Poppi Photography

Storey Publishing

The mission of Storey Publishing is to serve our customers by publishing practical information that encourages personal independence in harmony with the environment.

Edited by Liz Bevilacqua and Sarah Guare

Art direction and book design by Alethea Morrison

Indexed by Christine R. Lindemer, Boston Road Communications

Cover and interior photography by © Poppi Photography, except for page 74, Jazmin Quaynor/Unsplash

Text © 2021 by Devon Loftus and Jenna Radomski

Ebook production by Slavica A. Walzl

Ebook version 1.0
October 12, 2021

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To those in search of empowerment through self-love and good food — this is for you.

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FOREWORD

Traversing the Seasons of Womanhood Together

BY KATIE LEMONS, TWIST OF LEMONS

I first met Devon after traversing my way through a blustery yet picturesque snowy New England blizzard. We tucked ourselves in cozily at a café on one of Boston's cobblestone streets. The whole afternoon was idyllic—big fluffy snowflakes falling outside the window, bottomless cups of piping-hot coffee, and easy conversation with someone I felt I'd known for a lifetime.

I've now known Devon—her words, passions, and big ideas—not only in winters but in many seasons of life. Each season of my own life has brought different challenges—learning, living, loving, but also failing, floundering, fumbling. The one

constant that has held me together through it all is nourishing myself with nutrient-dense foods and intentional compassion.

Devon's Moon Cycle Bakery helped me to glue together the pieces of my own life's mosaic. What most thrills me about *The Moon Cycle Cookbook* is the wholesome and expansive definition of femininity. It treasures all parts of womanhood, whatever that looks like—not simply the physical aches and pains of a menstrual or uterine experience. It's about learning to take care and self-nourish during the crampy parts of life, the unexpected and the unknown, the joyful parts, and the sorrow-filled parts, too. It's about listening and leaning into intuitive repletion. These tenets are embodied in Moon Cycle Bakery and this book.

I often think back to that first afternoon Devon and I spent with one another—just being, just together. That sense of warmth and community is etched into every fiber of *The Moon Cycle Cookbook*. This book embraces and emphasizes community in a scrumptious way. Have you ever noticed the word *community* contains the letters and sound of a little "yum" in there? After experiencing this book, I think that's definitely on purpose!

This book is like tucking yourself into your favorite café on a snowy day—bursting with comfort and delicious joy—and having a conversation with a forever friend.

May you traverse the seasons of womanhood within these pages.

For Your Support and Nourishment

Hi there. My name is Devon and I'm the founder of Moon Cycle Bakery, a baked goods delivery service. We specialize in making delicious treats with hormone-supportive ingredients that are designed to nourish women from the inside out. My business is built on a foundation of seeing, hearing, and acknowledging others. We believe that when we embrace ourselves and our individualized needs, we can make empowered choices for our health and well-being.

The story of my business — and this book — began many years ago, when I was in college. It was there that I found depression. Or perhaps it found me. Either way, soon I felt like I

was drowning. It was hard and scary, and there were moments when I wasn't sure I wanted to go on, but seeing the fear on my mom's face while she watched her daughter suffer was enough for me to choose to receive help.

During therapy, I learned a lot. I healed a lot. I fell in love with myself. I learned how to have my own back.

I had thought for so long that my pain came solely from not feeling heard or seen by others, but through therapy I realized that it actually sprang from self-neglect. I was suffering because I wasn't taking the time to care what I thought about myself, to physically listen to my body and give it what it needs, or to celebrate myself in all my imperfect, quirky, loving ways.

I decided to commit to these four acts for the rest of my life: hearing, listening, acknowledging, and empowering. Through a move across the country, ruptured ovarian cysts and ER visits, a wedding, a kitchen fire, reactions from birth control, lifeless work environments, a business start-up, departure from the West Coast, pregnancy and birth and postpartum depression — through it all, I practiced these four acts.

During my bachelorette party, a comment from a friend awoke me to the fact that other women want to be held, seen, and acknowledged as well. Near the end of the night, my fiancé arrived with a homemade cake decked out with chocolate ganache, which was welcomed warmly. A friend said to me, "I don't know if it's because I'm about to get my period, but I almost cried, this cake is so good." What started as a passing joke became a much bigger conversation. My friends and I wondered: Where is the support during our periods? What do we really know about what happens in our bodies and spirits

during each phase of the menstrual cycle? How can we best support and celebrate ourselves?

The questions we pondered that night led me to start a business that commits to seeing and hearing others during their challenging moments. In this same spirit, my coauthor, Jenna, a nutritionist, and I came together to make the book you hold now. Our greatest goal is to see and hear others, share knowledge and soul, and leave women feeling empowered to support themselves in the ways they find they need.

And because so many good, magical things involve nourishing, delicious food, we chose to start there.

Welcome to Moon Cycle Bakery.

THE MOON AND ITS PHASES

In ancient times, it was believed that women bled on a new moon and ovulated on a full moon (an occurrence likely due to the lack of the artificial light that we experience today). Because of this, women of years past believed that the energy of the moon was in direct proportion to the energy of their spirit — hence the term *moon cycle*. Today, many women, including ourselves, find that they don't follow this lunar pattern and bleed at different moon

phases throughout the year. Our company's name, Moon Cycle Bakery, is an homage to the romance and power that lives within natural rhythms and a reminder of how powerful we are as a result of being connected to a cycle each month.

Whether your period aligns with the moon phases is neither here nor there, and it is not something we'll be covering in this book. What matters most to us is that you feel empowered to reclaim *your* cycle, however that looks and feels, and add warmth and inspiration to your own rituals of each phase. Whether you bleed with or without the moon, you're still as powerful, bright, and alluring as she is.

Here's to YOU

Before you read further, pause for a moment. Close your eyes. Take a breath. Listen. Wait. That feeling of calm, of certainty, of presence — that's what this book is about.

Of course, life isn't always calm and steady, and perhaps you are juggling chaos and stress right now. The truth is that change and uncertainty walk ever beside us. Change can feel scary. Change can feel heavy. Change can feel wrong and odd.

But change is good, too, for with change comes growth, and with growth comes life. The goal is not to avoid change, but to learn to walk beside it with compassion and love for our incredibly humbling human experience. This book is about the calm and presence we sense when we fully embrace change — when we embrace the seasons of womanhood, seasons of life, seasons within ourselves, and seasons within the menstrual cycle. It's about learning how to live with trust and gratitude, whether we are feeling chaotic and dense or light and full of ease.

In order to meet every corner of ourselves without judgment and with a grounded heart, we must nourish ourselves. No one else can do it for us. Nourishment is what sustains us during those dark, speechless nights when we're in the thick of a storm, relying solely on ourselves to put one foot in front of the other.

We believe in soul-deep nourishment — the kind we experience from a hearty bowl of soup or the familiar sound of our mother's voice. It's the kind of nourishment we receive from having the strength to know what we need and the courage to choose just that. It's important to us that this book offers you a grounded feeling each time you hold it in your hands and peruse its pages. We've poured intention into every mark, every photo, and every word so that this book may provide you with a sense of home within yourself. That's the

gift we're given when we learn to embrace our cycles and choose integrity.

Each of the four chapters in this book focuses on a phase of the menstrual cycle. Our goal is to share the science of what happens physiologically during this time and give you choices for how to respond, so that *you* are empowered to choose the best ways to nourish yourself. We also suggest rituals to support you emotionally and spiritually, helping you adapt and thrive during each particular phase (see Creating Your Own Rituals). Whole body. Whole self.

We've connected each of the four phases of the menstrual cycle with one of the four seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall), based on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) concepts and our own interpretations (see The Seasons of Your Cycle). Just as each season is marked with distinct characteristics, each phase of the menstrual cycle embodies a unique temperament based on hormonal fluctuations that affect everything from energy levels to cravings. Because these changes happen quickly over the course of a month, it can sometimes feel jarring to be riding the high of summer (the ovulation phase), then find yourself vulnerable and raw during autumn (the luteal phase). We believe that the seasonal associations provide a very helpful and beautiful way of viewing the menstrual cycle, and we hope you feel empowered and emboldened to explore the seasonal associations for yourself and embrace each season with patience and curiosity.

CYCLE PHASE	SEASON	MOON PHASE
Menstrual	Winter	New moon
Follicular	Spring	Half moon

CYCLE PHASE	SEASON	MOON PHASE
Ovulation	Summer	Full moon
Luteal	Fall	Crescent moon

And then there's the food. Oh, the food! Each chapter contains recipes ranging from breakfast to elixirs and desserts — each recipe crafted with intention to support your body and the hormonal, mental, and emotional shifts it is undergoing. These recipes are warm, inviting, joyful, simple, and satisfying. They're meant to lift you up, ground you down, fill you, and release you. You will discover a plethora of tastes, colors, and textures that hold you and celebrate you fully.

We don't believe in dogmatic ways. There are no hard-and-fast rules here. For example, while we recommend eating foods rich in vitamin B_{12} during the menstrual phase, that does not mean the menstrual phase is the only time you should consume these foods. None of what we share is a prescribed way of living. We give recommendations for nutrients and practices that we have found best support our bodies and those of the women we work with, but take them as just that: recommendations. We encourage you to explore what it is *you* need, and we offer you a space to do so vibrantly.

Beyond addressing your cycle, this book was created to celebrate you and the beauty you contain in all your dynamic phases. Our hope is that this book is timeless and that you find yourself pulling it out, again and again, each time you need to fill your soul and your belly, and that you pass it on to friends, family, children, and grandchildren. We're connected to our ancestors through our blood, and this book is meant to pay

homage to them while paying homage to you and those you nurture in return.

So, here's to you: the woman who shows up for others, nourishes the collective, spreads warmth, reignites flames, holds space, loves deeply, and accepts others in all their shapes and forms. We see you in your fullness, and you're as radiant as mama moon herself.

Time to rise.

The Seasons of Your Cycle

While Jenna was studying for her master's degree in holistic nutrition, she was introduced to the TCM concept of viewing the phases of the menstrual cycle as the four seasons. This framework deeply resonated with her as a way to view how the ebbs and flows of our mood, our desires, and even our cravings mirror nature's seasons — so much so that she wanted to integrate her interpretation of this framework into these pages. TCM suggests choosing certain cooking methods during each phase and adjusting your lifestyle to fit hormonal fluctuations, and you will see this concept explained in each chapter. Please note that we are not Chinese medicine practitioners and only skim the surface of this nuanced practice. For a deeper dive, turn to Further Reading.

In each of the four chapters that follow, we also convey our individual beliefs about the seasons of life. As a writer, Devon has always found herself intrigued by the poetic nature of life's seasons — the fact that we all experience "winter, spring, summer, and fall" within our own lives. This concept is universal, tying us ever closer to one another and to the natural world that is in and around us.

We hope that both the TCM outlook and our own interpretations of the seasons of the menstrual cycle are helpful to you. We invite you to reflect on your own seasons during your menstrual cycle and what your seasons show you.

Creating Your Own Rituals

The term ritual was first used to describe religious ceremonies, and some folks may still associate the word only with religious teachings. The rituals throughout this book could be deemed religious, but in a very different way than the conventional sense.

Our religion is one to ourselves. We worship our health, our bodies, our minds, and our emotions. We have faith in our wisdom and in our strength as women, and we seek and integrate rituals that fully support us — mind, body, and spirit. These rituals differ from season to season and from phase to phase, and they are consistently open to reinterpretation and fluid movement — much like how we, as creatures, evolve.

We prefer to think of rituals as rhythms; we find that "rhythms" feels grounding and on par for exactly what our rituals give us — rhythms that we honor, sink into, and hold sacred; rhythms that ebb and flow with our growth and transformation. Rituals are a way of honoring and celebrating *being* instead of *doing.* Rituals help you create space for yourself in a busy world that asks a lot of you. And when you hold this space sacred, which can be challenging to do, no one (including yourself!) can manipulate you.

You may need to complete a ritual many times before it becomes a part of your regular routine. This is why many of the rituals in our wellness guide are quiet, simple, and small — inclusive, accessible, and real. We believe that the rituals, systems, and moments you create are never there to make you "fuller," because the ultimate truth is that you are already

whole. Rather, they are there to help you pause and acknowledge yourself — see what's working, what's not, and how to better honor yourself in a celebratory way. That said, if a ritual does not give you clarity or if you are not able to integrate it into your life, it doesn't mean you've failed or you are less than. These practices are *for* you, never against you, and your willingness and ability to do them will change through time. Let's embrace that.

In a world where you can feel constantly bombarded with a "new ritual" to adopt, it's important that you take the time to ask yourself how and why your rituals, your moments of pause, are important for you specifically. Just as we all metabolize nutrients differently, we metabolize rituals individually as well—what works for you may not work for someone else. To worship yourself, you need to know yourself. So as you happen upon rituals we describe, ask yourself the questions below. Use your answers as a road map to what *your* mind, body, and soul desire.

- ✶ What do the words *ritual* or *rhythm* mean to you? What is your relationship to your rituals? Define it for yourself here.
- ✶ Why rituals? What do they bring you that you want more of in your life (for example, peace, pause, energy, focus, clarity)? What do you need from your rituals to fill you up? Do they need to be simple? Include certain elements? Be performed with others or alone? By being intentional, you can stay grounded when wellness trends come and go, and you can feel empowered to decide what works best for you.

- ✶ Choose to release judgment. Your rituals don't need to look a certain way — small steps or big movements are equally valid. They need to be whatever they need to be *for you*.

A soulful prescription, a sacred moment, a place to pause that evolves with each season — that's what rituals mean to us and what we'll be sharing throughout this book.

Happy worshipping.

Perimenopause and Menopause

When considering the menstrual cycle, it is also important to address the equally as powerful and oftentimes challenging seasons of life that are commonly swept under the rug: perimenopause, menopause, and postmenopause.

PERIMENOPAUSE means “around menopause.” It refers to the 10 or so years leading up to menopause and includes the many hormonal changes and symptoms that often show up during menopause. Cycles become irregular and eventually absent, and more and more cycles are anovulatory (without ovulation). Without ovulation, the body is not producing progesterone, which leads to an increase of PMS symptoms. This, coupled with the drastic and rapid changes of estrogen levels, often produces heavy periods, mood swings, hot flashes, sleep issues, increased inflammation, vaginal dryness, and headaches.

MENOPAUSE is the permanent pause of menstruation and the end of reproductive years due to the inactivity of the ovaries. It is specifically defined as the single day that marks one year without a period. The age at which menopause occurs is based mostly on genetic factors. Menopause commonly occurs anywhere between 45 and 55 years old, with the average age between 50 and 52 years old. Premature menopause can happen as early as 30 years, and delayed menopause can happen at 60 or later.

POSTMENOPAUSE is all of life after menopause.

While the hormonal changes during perimenopause are inevitable, their symptoms can be eased through natural approaches. Our main goals will be to:

- Support progesterone production (see Antioxidants)
- Detoxify estrogen (see Cruciferous Vegetables)

- Reduce inflammation (see Vitamin B_6)

Our hope is that the nutrition information throughout this book will bring relief to those riding the roller coaster of perimenopause and menopause.

Cooking Tips and Tricks

Whether you move like a pro in the kitchen or you crave a bit of guidance, this book is for you. Each recipe is created with nourishment and hormonal support in mind *and* is meant to be feasible for the everyday cook — because the truth is that sometimes, feeding ourselves physically (and soulfully) can feel daunting. We're here to bring simplicity and celebration back into self-care.

You'll notice that the majority of the ingredients within these pages can be found at most grocery stores. The recipe titles may remind you of a meal your grandma used to make, or maybe one is your go-to dish when you long for comfort and mothering. You won't need the fanciest equipment, tools, or cooking techniques to complete these recipes. Our goal is to offer simple and wholesome recipes that feel decadent without taking up all your time and energy. We're talking about grounded basics at their best.

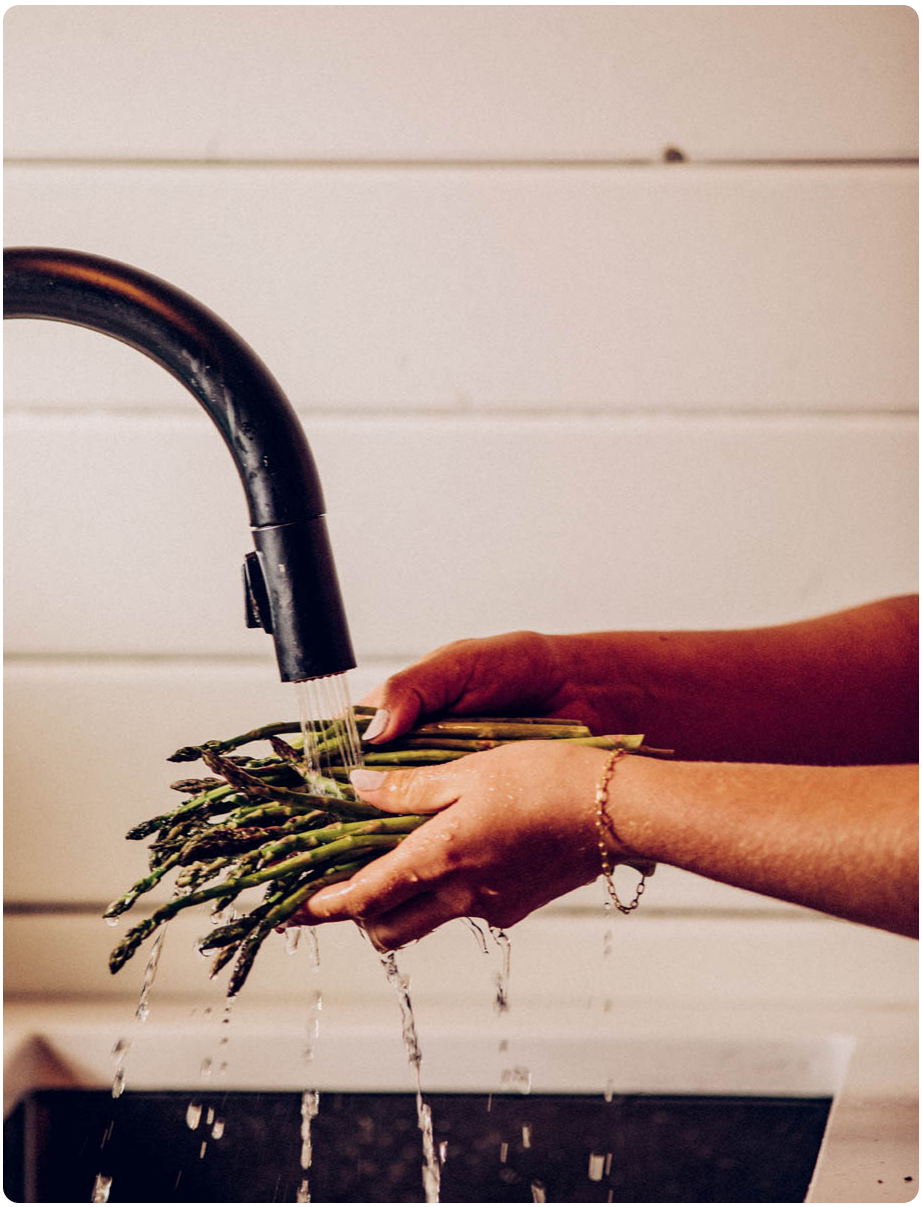
To further aid in your cooking endeavors, we've compiled a few of our best tips and tricks that every home cook should have at the ready. Tie up your apron — you've got this.

SELECTING INGREDIENTS

In everything we do, including choosing ingredients, we make a conscious effort to check dogmatic ideals at the door, as we believe that life is complex, nuanced, and unique to everyone.

While we value flexibility, we do keep the following points in mind when stocking our kitchens.

WE CHOOSE LOCAL AND/OR ORGANIC, WHEN POSSIBLE. The sourcing of our food has a vast ripple effect that impacts laborers and farmers, the soil, natural resources, our climate, and our ecosystems. Purchasing food local to our area supports the local economy, and it reduces the environmental impact, because shipping food long distances creates a large carbon footprint. Plus, many foods have the most nutritional value when just picked and lose nutrients in storage, so the farther away these foods are cultivated from us, the fewer nutrients they have when they finally reach our door or local grocery store. Organic foods are grown according to a strict set of guidelines, which aim to promote soil health and animal welfare and preserve natural resources and biodiversity. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees organic certifications, but it's important to note that many farmers and ranchers utilize these guidelines without seeking the expensive certification.



WE CHOOSE TO EAT GLUTEN AND DAIRY WHEN IT FEELS RIGHT FOR OUR BODIES. You'll notice as you work your way through these recipes that many are naturally gluten- and dairy-free. While we both eat and enjoy the occasional thick slice of sourdough bread or hunk of aged cheddar, our goal is to acknowledge and honor the wide variety of eating patterns that women have, especially as they relate to menstrual cycles.

Various experts in the health and wellness sphere recommend avoiding gluten and dairy entirely, as those foods can cause inflammation, which then may lead to painful or irregular periods, among other unpleasant symptoms, *for some*. That last part — *for some* — is the nuance that often gets lost in conversations about nutrition and wellness, and as a result, the directive becomes "avoid at all costs."

To best serve you, we have removed a lot of the guesswork by creating easily modifiable recipes. When we say to choose "your favorite bread," we truly mean it. Whole wheat, gluten-free, sourdough, or whatever works best for your body — they are all great. If you feel better when you stay away from dairy, then go ahead and substitute a dairy-free product for the dairy in a recipe or leave it out altogether. Conversely, if a recipe calls for a dairy- or gluten-free component, don't hesitate to substitute a dairy or gluten product if that feels right for you.

So whether you eat vegetarian, avoid gluten, or follow any other type of eating pattern, our hope is that you'll find freedom in making these recipes work for you.

WE PURCHASE GRASS-FED BEEF AND DAIRY PRODUCTS AND PASTURE-RAISED CHICKEN AND EGGS, WHEN POSSIBLE. Products from grass-fed and pasture-raised animals have naturally higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which help reduce inflammation in the body. In contrast, animals raised using conventional agriculture methods are fed a diet full of grains — a diet that is unnatural to the animal — that results in meat, dairy, and eggs with higher levels of omega-6 fatty acids, which in high quantities can be pro-inflammatory.

WE PURCHASE FRESH FOODS WHEN THEY ARE IN SEASON AND WHEN IT MAKES PRACTICAL SENSE (when we can use it up before it spoils or have room for it in our budget). Outside of that, frozen and canned foods can be a part of an overall healthy lifestyle and save some time and headache! Frozen fruits and vegetables are generally harvested at peak freshness and flash frozen, which locks in flavor and nutrients. Canning is another way to preserve foods, and canned goods can be excellent when we need to get something on the table fast. When purchasing canned goods, we look for BPA-free cans and choose foods stored in water versus syrups.

At the end of the day, what we stock our home with is unique to us all and is based on many factors, including food access, lifestyle choices, health, budget, and preferences. Always check in with your gut (pun intended) when buying products and heeding new nutritional information, and remember that you know your body best.

SHOPPING ON A BUDGET

As wellness products have become trendy, it can seem like living a healthy lifestyle is impossibly pricey. It's no secret that living under financial stress is hard on overall physical, mental, and emotional health, so it's important to pick and choose where you can spend more and where you can save. Here are a few tips to reduce your monthly grocery bill (and love yourself up within your boundaries).

SHOP THE BULK SECTION for tons of goodies like grains, seeds, nuts, flours, sugars, dried fruit, spices, and teas. More and more stores are popping up with extensive bulk sections that also include honey, vinegars, oils, and household items. Buying bulk generally saves money, reduces packaging waste, and allows you to purchase just the right amount of an item for you and your family's needs. Store your bulk items in airtight containers and they'll last even longer! Win-win.

SHOP WITH THE SEASONS. We in the Western world have become accustomed to having access to nearly all foods, all year, but Mother Nature is on a cycle, just as we are. Berries at the peak of their season will be much more reasonably priced than in the dead of winter. A simple way to shop with the seasons is to attend farmers' markets or join a local community-supported agriculture (CSA) venture. Bonus if you buy in bulk according to the seasons and freeze/preserve/can to enjoy your bounty all year long!

MAKE A SHOPPING LIST AND COMMIT TO IT. This will save time, stop those sticky fingers from grabbing extra at the grocery store (guilty), and keep you on track for your budget.

MAKING YOUR OWN VEGETABLE STOCK

Save vegetable scraps for making stock. Seriously, it's a game changer. And it's easy to do.

As you're chopping ingredients for recipes, save the peels, leaves, or ends of your vegetables in an airtight container and store them in the freezer. At any given time, we have onion peels, carrot butts, celery leaves, lemon wedges, zucchini skins, butternut squash seeds, potato and garlic skins, and herb stalks in our containers. Avoid keeping any scraps that may add a bitter or overpowering flavor to the stock, such as broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and turnips — those can be composted.

Once your container is full, pour the scraps into a large soup pot or slow cooker, cover with water, and simmer for at least 1 hour. Strain and season with salt to taste, pour into jars, and use for sauces, soups, cooking grains — you name it! If you've made more than you'll use within a few days, store the rest in the freezer and thaw as needed.

HAVING A POT OF GRAINS

Having a large batch of cooked grains at the ready can be a saving grace when you need to throw a meal together in a pinch. Just roast some vegetables, choose your protein, and add some avocado, a fried egg, or a delicious sauce. Now you have a filling, well-rounded meal.

While the liquid and time requirements vary for each grain, the basic cooking method is the same: Combine the grain, liquid, and a generous pinch of salt in a saucepan or large pot and place over medium-high heat on the stovetop. Once the mixture begins to boil, reduce the heat to low and cover with a

tight-fitting lid until the liquid has been absorbed and the grain is tender. This can take anywhere from 10 minutes for old-fashioned oats to 60 minutes for wild rice. Then remove the pot from the heat and let stand, covered, for 10 to 15 minutes so any remaining liquid can be absorbed.

One of the best kitchen appliance investments we can recommend is a basic rice cooker. Not only can you cook rice along with most other grains, but you can also set it and forget it! Rice cookers are affordable and can often be found secondhand. See the table below for grain-to-liquid ratios and stovetop cooking times for common grains. Cooked grains will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

Cooking Common Grains

GRAIN	GRAIN-TO-LIQUID RATIO	STOVETOP SIMMER TIME
White rice	1 cup rice to 1 1/2 cups liquid	15–20 minutes
Brown rice	1 cup rice to 2 cups liquid	35–45 minutes
Wild rice	1 cup rice to 3 1/2 cups liquid	55–60 minutes
Quinoa	1 cup quinoa to 2 cups liquid	12–15 minutes
Rolled oats	1 cup oats to 2 cups liquid	10–15 minutes
Steel-cut oats	1 cup oats to 3 cups liquid	15–25 minutes
Millet	1 cup millet to 2 cups liquid	15–20 minutes

HAVING A POT OF BEANS

Beans are another staple to have on hand. If you opt to cook dry beans, note that you'll need to plan ahead for cooking and possibly soaking. While dry beans don't *have* to be soaked prior to cooking, doing so will drastically reduce the cooking time and help break down some of the fibers that can cause gas. We suggest stocking both dried and canned beans — the latter for those days when you need a quick, simple meal.

To prep dry beans, comb through them, removing any bits of debris, and give them a good rinse through a strainer. If you're soaking them, pour them into a large container and cover with about 3 inches of water. Soak overnight, or at least 6 hours, then strain and give them another rinse.

Transfer the beans to a large heavy-bottomed pot, and cover with fresh water by about 2 inches. Place over medium-low heat and bring to a gentle simmer, stirring occasionally. Generously season your beans, as they will absorb the flavors as they cook. Now comes the hardest part — waiting! Presoaked beans can take as long as 3 hours to reach perfect tenderness, depending on the soaking time and the age of the beans (see the table below for cooking times for common beans).

Cooking Times for Common Beans

BEAN	STOVETOP SIMMER TIME
Adzuki beans	35–45 minutes

BEAN	STOVETOP SIMMER TIME
Black beans	45 minutes–1 hour
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)	1 1/2–2 hours
Kidney beans	1 1/2–2 hours
Navy beans	1–1 1/2 hours
Pinto beans	1–1 1/2 hours

Taste three or four beans every 30 minutes while simmering for tenderness. Once they're tender, taste and adjust the seasonings, then allow the beans to cool in their cooking liquid before serving or storing. Store cooked beans in their cooking liquid in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

As a general rule, 1 cup of dry beans yields about 3 cups cooked, and one 15-ounce can of beans yields about 1 1/2 cups beans.

KNOWING YOUR SPICE LIMIT

Are you a spice fiend? We sure are but are well aware that not everyone is. You'll notice that some recipes *sound* spicy but are actually pretty mild (such as our Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup), while others include optional ingredients that provide

added kick. If you know you have a lower spice tolerance, we recommend starting with a very small amount of the spicy ingredient (about 1/8 teaspoon of a ground spice), tasting, and going up from there.

When cooking with chile peppers, remember that the hottest parts of the pepper are the seeds and veins. Seed and devein chile peppers to reduce spice, leave veins for medium spice, or leave seeds and veins for maximum spice.

Or simply omit the spicy ingredient. It's important to remember that many recipes can be modified, unless you're making a baked good — there's some serious chemistry going on in those recipes. You are in charge of what goes in the pot.

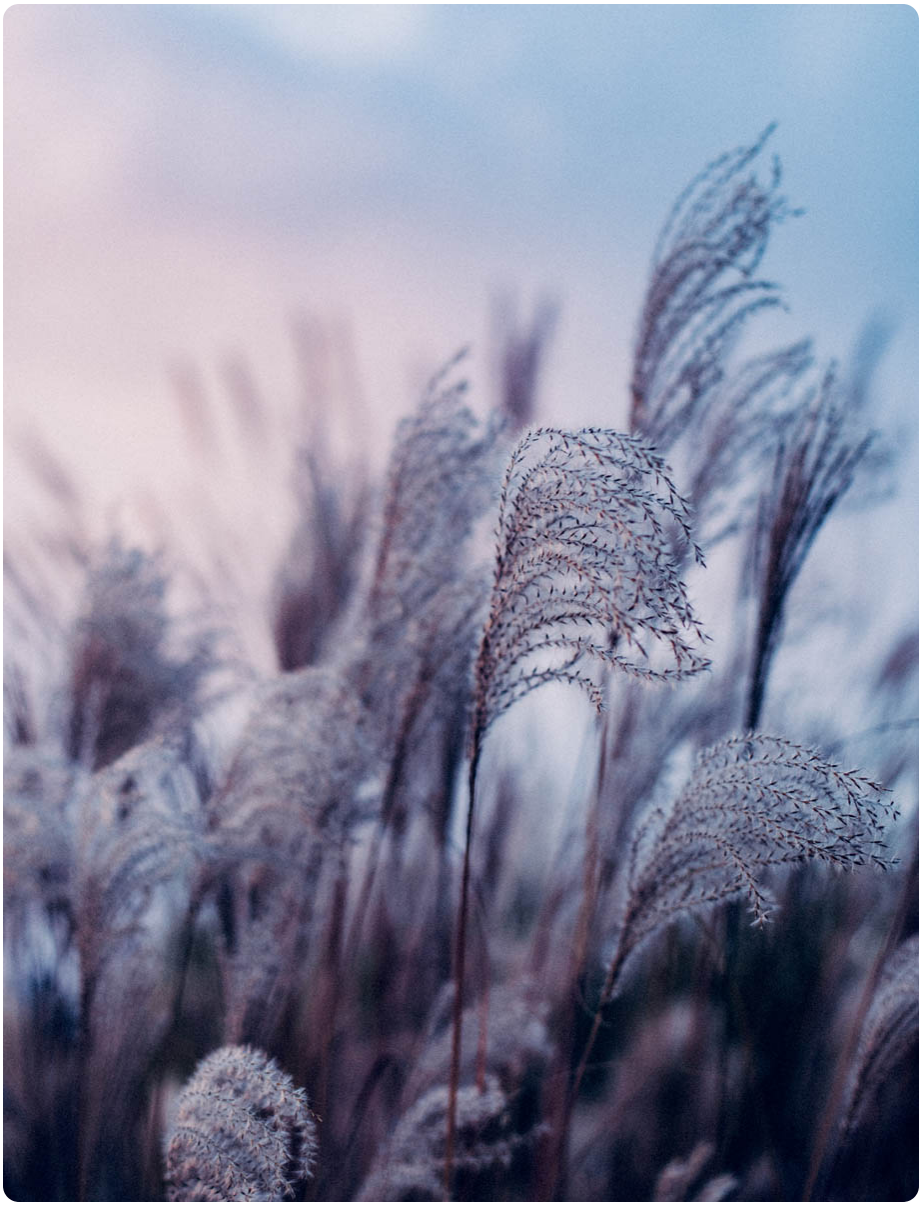
Have fun and make it your own!

1

Hear the Call of the Wise Woman

THE MENSTRUAL PHASE

Aunt Flo. That time of the month. On the rag. Our menstrual phase has picked up more nicknames than we care to count. But despite having multiple names and phrases to describe this miraculous, natural phase that women experience, many of us don't completely understand what the heck is happening to our bodies.



Let's look at the facts. It's completely normal to have a cycle that lasts anywhere from 21 to 35 days, with 28 days being the *average.* During the menstrual phase, because the egg that was released during your last cycle wasn't fertilized, your body no longer needs the thickened lining of your uterus. The hormones progesterone and estrogen drop to their lowest levels, causing the uterine lining to shed. The menstrual phase, when you are bleeding, generally lasts 3 to 7 days. Your body is truly a well-oiled machine, already beginning to prepare for the next phase of the cycle while you bleed. The brain begins releasing follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), which triggers the ovaries to grow several follicles at the same time; then it becomes sort of like a race to see which follicle will produce the strongest and healthiest egg that potentially will become fertilized. Go, follicles, go!

In traditional Chinese medicine, the menstrual phase corresponds with winter. Many of us crave deep rest, a quiet and cozy space, and an empty calendar to tend to our own needs. This is a time to slow down.

Winter

It's the silver tint that catches your eye.
And the quiet.
What is it about the stillness that feels like home?
Smoke billows out of old chimneys in the distance
and you catch their ashy smell as you breathe in,
creating warmth in your lungs
like cinnamon.
Winter on your skin, as you follow that call home.
All the while
that silver moon follows you.

MENSTRUAL PHASE SNAPSHOT

Season

WINTER

Moon Phase

NEW MOON

Archetypes

WISE WOMAN, CRONE, VISIONARY

THE BASICS

- A normal cycle lasts anywhere between 21 and 35 days, with an average of 28 days.
- The first day of full bleeding (not spotting) is day 1 of the menstrual cycle.
- The average menstrual phase lasts anywhere between 3 and 7 days.
- We lose between 25 and 80 milliliters of blood each month through menstruation (see tips on figuring out how much you are bleeding).

WHAT'S HAPPENING

A wise woman lives within you, now and always. She rubs her eyes and surfaces during the menstrual phase, and you can learn from her when you listen closely. The dips in estrogen and progesterone can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and restlessness.

The menstrual phase can be both mentally and physically exhausting — your body is doing hard, physical work, and you are undergoing a lot of hormonal changes. Make space for this and for that wise woman — she knows what to do.

HOW YOUR LIFESTYLE IS AFFECTED

It's important to listen to your body and rest when needed. Take breaks from your busy social calendar and do things that fill up your cup. The two hemispheres of your brain are also the most communicative with one another in this phase.

It's a great time to evaluate what is happening around you, listen to your intuition about what is no longer serving you, and set new intentions moving forward. Try out a meditation practice, talk to someone, or indulge in mindful movement like long walks or tai chi.

PAY ATTENTION TO

- A vibrant yes. If it's not yes, it's a no.
- Your intuition. Choose confidence, and let the doubt rest.
- Your feelings. Create space in your schedule to feel. Embrace the fact that your vulnerability and feelings are heightened.

LET'S TALK ABOUT CRAMPING

Painful cramping, or primary dysmenorrhea, is the number one complaint we hear from women. This may show up during day 1 or 2 of your period as lower abdominal/back pain or cramping and possibly diarrhea or nausea. It can feel like a little gremlin is kneading itself on your uterus and, in more severe cases, can cause fainting, vomiting, and a case of the very real bedridden blues.

Here's the truth: Severe cramping does *not* have to be a part of having a menstrual cycle. Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) symptoms (which do not include conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome or endometriosis) are signals from your body that something is off. Think too much inflammation or hormonal imbalance. There are holistic ways, primarily through diet, to remedy cramping and other PMS symptoms as well. You can absolutely have a symptom-free period!

Here's what's happening in the body to cause these cramps: Just before your period is about to start, the cells in the uterine lining release compounds called prostaglandins to stimulate the uterine muscles to contract to induce menstruation. Once bleeding begins, these compounds are released into the bloodstream; *too many* leads to painful symptoms.

Lifestyle Fixes for Soothing Cramps

TAKE AN EPSOM SALTS BATH. Soaking in hot water relaxes the muscles, stimulates blood flow, and can rapidly reduce menstrual cramping. Epsom salts (or magnesium sulfate) is touted to provide relief for muscle aches and pains, the theory being that the magnesium is absorbed through the skin. This, however, hasn't been fully proven, which leads us to believe that the power of the mind is extraordinary (and warm water is heavenly). For extra relaxation, try the Lavender + Rose Bath Soak.

Lavender + Rose Bath Soak

Makes enough for 2–4 baths; *Prep time:* 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- **2** cups Epsom salts
- **2** tablespoons carrier oil (such as coconut, avocado, or almond)
- **2** tablespoons dried lavender flowers
- **2** tablespoons dried rosebuds, crushed
- **5–10** drops lavender essential oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the Epsom salts, carrier oil, lavender, rosebuds, and lavender essential oil in a large mixing bowl and stir well. Store in an airtight container until ready to use. Add between 1/2 and 1 cup to a hot, steamy bath and stir to dissolve.

USE A HEATING PAD. Just as submerging your abdomen in hot water can effectively relieve cramps, so can snuggling up with a heating pad. Applying heat to your lower belly or back relaxes the uterine muscles while increasing blood flow to the area, which can quickly reduce pain.

TRY MYOFASCIAL RELEASE. This alternative medicine technique is used for treating skeletal muscle immobility and pain by relaxing contracted muscles. It improves blood, oxygen, and lymphatic circulation; stimulates the stretch reflex in muscles; and has helped many women with menstrual and premenstrual syndrome symptoms. During menstruation, the fascia of the uterine lining tightens like a net around the pelvis. When the menstrual cycle begins, the combination of fascial tightness and increasing internal pressure exerts heavy pressure on the nerves and blood vessels, resulting in cramping and back tightening. Myofascial release can loosen

the tightened fascia of the uterine lining, relieving internal pressure and pressure on nerves. To learn more, talk to your doctor or a physical therapist.

How Do I Know How Much I'm Bleeding?

- A fully soaked, regular tampon/pad holds around 5 milliliters of blood, while a fully soaked, super tampon holds around 10 milliliters. You can tell how much you're bleeding with a bit more ease if you use a menstrual cup.
- If you have to change your pad or tampon every 1 to 2 hours, you may be bleeding more heavily than normal. It's always a good idea to seek guidance from your doctor, especially if you begin feeling effects from the amount of blood you lose (such as fatigue).

DO ACUPRESSURE AND SELF-MASSAGE. Acupressure is an alternative medicine technique, similar in principle to acupuncture, that is based on the concept that life energy flows through meridians, or energy channels, in the body. Physical pressure is applied to acupuncture points with the aim of clearing blockages in these meridians. Acupressure has been found to be as effective, if not more so, than ibuprofen in the reduction of cramps without any negative side effects. By better understanding your body and your cycle, and using self-care practices such as acupressure, you can reduce physical

pain! It's another example that the human mind and body are best friends.

BE MINDFUL OF ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS and use environmentally and body-friendly menstrual products (see our list of recommended products). Endocrine disruptors are compounds that, at certain doses, interfere with our endocrine (a.k.a. hormonal) system. Another commonly used descriptor is *xenoestrogen*, meaning a foreign natural or synthetic compound that mimics the effects of estrogen. Two of the most talked about endocrine disruptors are bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates.

BPA is added to hard plastics to make them more durable and has been found to mimic the effects of estrogen. It can lead to painful menstrual cramps and reproductive issues. Many manufacturers have removed BPA from their products, but when they did so, they replaced it with a similar compound called bisphenol S (BPS). Not surprisingly, this has also been found to leach from plastic into our bodies.

Phthalates are another group of estrogenic compounds used to make plastic more flexible. These are commonly used in cosmetics, perfumes, shampoos, soaps, air fresheners, nail polish, plastic-wrapped foods (especially placed around fatty foods like meats and cheeses), and even in pesticides. These also interfere with both male and female reproductive health. One study found males with phthalate exposure had a 20 percent decreased fertility rate.

Because the modern world is filled with thousands and thousands of chemicals and many are synthetic, it can feel impossible to avoid them. To navigate overwhelm, we suggest taking things one step at a time, starting with your menstrual

products. Think about it: These products come into contact with the incredibly sensitive and absorbent vaginal tissue. It's best to avoid products with pesticides, bleach, fragrance, and hormone-disruptive plastics when possible. And above all, *breathe*. Taking care of your mental, emotional, and physical health through simple wellness practices is still the best and cheapest way to care for yourself!

Dietary Changes for Soothing Cramps

For longer-term solutions for menstrual cramps, focus on reducing overall inflammation.

FOODS TO ADD

- **BERRIES**, which are rich in fiber and antioxidants
- **CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES** such as broccoli, cauliflower, and kale — these support liver detoxification
- **TURMERIC** because it's an anti-inflammatory
- **FRESH, DRIED, OR CRYSTALLIZED GINGER** because it contains powerful antioxidants that fight upset stomachs and harmful free radicals, and research shows ginger supplements may help reduce painful period cramps
- **HORMONE-SUPPORTIVE FATS** such as butter, avocado, coconut, nuts, and seeds

FOODS TO REDUCE

- **REFINED SUGARS** such as cookies, sodas, crackers, and candy
- **FRIED FOODS**
- **CAFFEINE** because some people have a lower tolerance than others
- **MEAT FROM GRAIN-FED ANIMALS** because it is higher in pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids, which can lead to painful periods through the production of prostaglandins
- **ALCOHOL**

FOODS FOR NOURISHMENT

For many of us, menstruation can be physically and mentally exhausting due to the dips in hormones, increased inflammation, and loss of essential nutrients. During the menstrual phase, focus on whole ingredients that will help replenish certain micronutrients that are depleted during this time.

You might notice a spike in appetite as your body expends a lot of energy shedding the uterine lining. Part of the beauty of being cyclical creatures is that it trickles into all parts of our lives. We are dynamic in our hormones, sex drives, cravings, and creativity, and fluctuating hunger levels are a normal part of the ebbs and flows. Embrace and honor that.

While we believe in eating for hormonal support, we also value flexibility and creativity. We encourage you to look to your favorite cookbooks, recipes, cultural traditions, and of

course seasonal availability for inspiration. And as always, check in with what your body is craving. If you want a salad, don't second-guess it. If it's too hot outside to turn on your oven, skip the roasted veggies. Remember that the following recommendations are all meant to be a guide and source of empowerment, not a strict set of rules to follow. Our bodies can't operate optimally under dogmatic logic.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Using warm, hearty cooking methods (such as roasting, slow cooking, or stewing) that do not require a lot of active energy in the kitchen
- Eating grounding root vegetables such as beets, sweet potatoes, carrots, parsnips, onions, and turnips
- Incorporating foods with magnesium, zinc, antioxidants, iron, complex carbohydrates, and hormone-supportive fats into your daily rhythm

Magnesium

Magnesium is essential for the production of estrogen and progesterone, so as those hormones ramp up during the luteal phase (after ovulation), magnesium levels drop. On top of that, stress can cause magnesium stores to be depleted. The menstrual phase is the perfect storm for plummeting magnesium levels.

And guess what is chock-full of magnesium? That's right, chocolate. During the menstrual and luteal phases, we focus on recipes that use cacao, the purest and least processed form of chocolate, because it is high in antioxidants and is a great source of magnesium. Cacao powder's price point is not always budget friendly, so feel free to substitute with unsweetened cocoa powder, as it still offers magnesium and antioxidants. It's a delicious way to help reduce the less-than-ideal symptoms of low magnesium, such as cramping, bloating, headaches, and constipation. Oh, happy day!

Chocolate may be a favorite food to obtain magnesium, but it's not the only avenue. Other rich sources of magnesium

include avocado, brown rice, chickpeas, nuts, and leafy greens such as kale, Swiss chard, and spinach.

RECIPES FOR MAGNESIUM

- *Avocado Toast Three Ways*
- *Sweet Potato, Kale, and Beet Lentil Hash*
- *Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl*
- *Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Maple Pecans*
- *Roasted Beet Hummus*
- *Chocolate-Avocado Mousse with Raspberry Compote*
- *Hazelnut Brownies*
- *Vanilla-Cacao Elixir*

Zinc

Zinc is an essential mineral that supports the immune system and helps break down prostaglandins (the pro-inflammatory compounds that can build up and cause painful menstrual cramps). Like magnesium, it is necessary for estrogen and progesterone production.

You'll find high levels of zinc in beef, legumes, nuts, oysters and other seafood, seeds, and sea vegetables like seaweed.

RECIPES FOR ZINC

- *Sweet Potato and Beef Breakfast Bites*
- *Red Wine Braised Beef Short Ribs and Lentils*

- *Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl*
- *Cucumber-Sesame Seaweed Salad*
- *Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Maple Pecans*
- *Roasted Beet Hummus*
- *Pumpkin and Flax Pesto*

Antioxidants

Antioxidant is a shiny word these days, but what's all the fuss about? Antioxidants are a class of compounds, found mainly in plant foods, that protect cells from harmful damage. Consuming a diet full of antioxidant-rich foods can help cool inflammation in the body and therefore reduce symptoms such as cramps, headaches, and acne. This is especially important during perimenopause, when levels of estrogen and progesterone start to decline. It's essential to increase fresh fruits and vegetables for an antioxidant boost as the hormones wane.

All fruits, vegetables, and whole grains contain antioxidants, but some of the best sources are blueberries, cilantro, citrus, dark chocolate, ginger, green tea, leafy greens, pecans, plums and prunes, turmeric, and winter squash.

RECIPES FOR ANTIOXIDANTS

- *Avocado Toast Three Ways*
- *Sweet Potato, Kale, and Beet Lentil Hash*
- *Rosemary and Roasted Garlic Butternut Squash Soup*

- *Vegan Mac and Cheese with Roasted Broccoli*
- *Teriyaki Salmon Bowl with Carrots and Bok Choy*
- *Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl*
- *Cucumber-Sesame Seaweed Salad*
- *Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Maple Pecans*
- *Roasted Beet Hummus*
- *Pumpkin and Flax Pesto*
- *Chocolate-Avocado Mousse with Raspberry Compote*
- *Hazelnut Brownies*
- *Triple Berry Chia Pudding*
- *Vanilla-Cacao Elixir*

Iron

If you experience heavy periods and/or extreme fatigue related to your period, your iron levels might be low. Doctors have observed that low iron levels can both cause heavy periods and be the result of heavy periods. (Whoa, read that again. Doctors still don't completely understand the mechanism behind this.) If you fit the bill, make sure to seek counsel from your doctor before supplementing with iron, as you'll need a blood test to double-check. In the meantime, reach for iron-rich foods like grass-fed beef, hazelnuts, lentils, pumpkin seeds, quinoa, spinach, and tofu.

RECIPES FOR IRON

- *Sweet Potato and Beef Breakfast Bites*
- *Coconut-Quinoa Porridge with Earl Grey Poached Pears*
- *Adobo Tofu Breakfast Tacos*
- *Sweet Potato, Kale, and Beet Lentil Hash*
- *Red Wine Braised Beef Short Ribs and Lentils*
- *Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl*
- *Cucumber-Sesame Seaweed Salad*
- *Pumpkin and Flax Pesto*
- *Hazelnut Brownies*

Complex Carbohydrates

Iron and vitamin B_{12} both decline during menstrual periods and can result in fatigue, mood swings, and a loss of serotonin and dopamine. This may actually be a reason why we crave carbohydrates. Carbs can help replenish our serotonin and dopamine, but reaching for complex carbs (like a sweet potato) instead of simple carbs (a doughnut) can help ensure more balanced blood sugar and fewer mood swings. Further, complex carbohydrates promote healthy thyroid hormone function to calm the nervous system and oversee cortisol levels.

Reach for these complex carbohydrates to help stabilize your mood and reduce your stress level: cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli, cauliflower, and kale), root vegetables (think carrots, sweet potatoes, and parsnips), brown rice, buckwheat, millet, oats, and quinoa.

RECIPES FOR COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

- *Sweet Potato and Beef Breakfast Bites*
- *Coconut-Quinoa Porridge with Earl Grey Poached Pears*
- *Sweet Potato, Kale, and Beet Lentil Hash*
- *Rosemary and Roasted Garlic Butternut Squash Soup*
- *Vegan Mac and Cheese with Roasted Broccoli*
- *Slow Cooker Sweet Potato Chili*
- *Roasted Beet Hummus*

Hormone-Supportive Fats

We are delighted to see fat take the spotlight it has long deserved and shed the stigma that fat is the root of all nutrition evil. Fats are necessary building blocks for many compounds in our bodies, namely steroid hormones like estrogen and progesterone.

Reach for hormone-supportive fats such as avocados, bone broth, coconut, fatty fish, nuts, seeds, and full-fat hormone-free dairy.

RECIPES FOR HORMONE-SUPPORTIVE FATS

- *Avocado Toast Three Ways*
- *Coconut-Quinoa Porridge with Earl Grey Poached Pears*
- *Rosemary and Roasted Garlic Butternut Squash Soup*
- *Red Wine Braised Beef Short Ribs and Lentils*
- *Teriyaki Salmon Bowl with Carrots and Bok Choy*

- *Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl*
- *Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Maple Pecans*
- *Pumpkin and Flax Pesto*
- *Chocolate-Avocado Mousse with Raspberry Compote*
- *Hazelnut Brownies*
- *Triple Berry Chia Pudding*
- *Vanilla-Cacao Elixir*
- *Garlic Thyme Chicken Bone Broth*

BREAKFAST

Sweet Potato and Beef Breakfast Bites

Makes 16 bites

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

The menstrual phase calls for warmth and comfort, which is exactly what these bites deliver. Sweet potatoes are powerhouses during our periods because of the vitamin B_6 and complex carbs they contain. This nutritional duo helps reduce inflammation, detoxify estrogen, and increase serotonin production, promoting a happy, stable mood when the going gets tough. Sweet potatoes paired with grass-fed red meat, which can replenish iron stores, equal a bite-size breakfast of champions.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** pound ground beef
- **2** cups shredded sweet potato (about ½ of a large sweet potato)
- **⅓** cup shredded cheddar cheese
- **¼** cup diced yellow onion
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** egg

- **1½** teaspoons kosher salt
- **1** teaspoon paprika
- **1** teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine the ground beef, sweet potato, cheese, onion, garlic, egg, salt, paprika, Worcestershire, and pepper in a large bowl and mix well with your hands. Using a ¼-cup measure (or estimate with your hands), scoop up portions of the mixture. Shape them into small, round patties and place them on the prepared baking sheet. Gently flatten with the palm of your hand.
3. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the meat is no longer pink and has reached an internal temperature of 145°F (63°C). Let cool for a few minutes before serving warm. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

BREAKFAST

Avocado Toast Three Ways

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Because avocado toast one way just isn't enough, we put a simple but fresh spin on a fan favorite. What makes these so great? They won't break the bank, they don't require a ton of time, *and* they're kid friendly. Thanks to the avocados, these toast variations are chock-full of potassium and vitamin B_6 and are high in fat, fiber, and protein, making them a well-rounded, balanced breakfast.

BASE

- **1** avocado
- **1/4** teaspoon kosher salt
- Dash of freshly ground black pepper
- **2** slices of your favorite bread, toasted

- Topping of your choice (see the choices that follow)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the base, combine the avocado, salt, and pepper in a small bowl and mash together with a fork. Spread the avocado base evenly over each piece of toast.
2. Finish with one of the toppings that follow.

SOUTHWEST TOPPING

- 1/4 cup cooked black beans
- 1/4 cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- 1/4 cup finely diced zucchini (about 1/3 of a small zucchini)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- Squeeze of fresh lime juice
- Drizzle of hot sauce (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix the black beans, corn (thawed if previously frozen), zucchini, and cumin together in a small bowl. Spread on top of the avocado toast. Garnish with the cilantro, pumpkin seeds, lime juice, and hot sauce, if using.

BACON, GOAT CHEESE, AND HONEY TOPPING

- **3** pieces cooked bacon, roughly chopped
- **1** tablespoon crumbled goat cheese
- **1** teaspoon honey

INSTRUCTIONS

Evenly sprinkle the bacon and goat cheese on the avocado toast. Finish with a drizzle of honey.

STRAWBERRY, CUCUMBER, AND BALSAMIC TOPPING

- **1/4** cup sliced strawberries (about 3 strawberries)
- **1/4** cup sliced cucumber (about 1/3 of a small cucumber)
- **1** teaspoon balsamic vinegar

INSTRUCTIONS

Alternate the strawberries and cucumber on the avocado toast to create overlapping layers. Finish by drizzling with balsamic vinegar.

BREAKFAST

Coconut-Quinoa Porridge with Earl Grey Poached Pears

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

With poached pears and the slightest hint of coconut and Earl Grey tea, this porridge is luxury in a bowl. It can help you start your morning slow paced and feeling comforted. Quinoa is an excellent source of protein and fiber to jump-start your brain in the wee hours of the morning, plus it contains iron to help replenish your stores and combat period fatigue. What makes this even dreamier? Pears are a great source of vitamin C, which helps our bodies absorb nonheme iron (the type found in plants).

INGREDIENTS

- **2** cups water
- **1** tablespoon Earl Grey tea leaves (caffeinated or decaffeinated)
- **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **1** large Bartlett pear, peeled and quartered, seeds removed
- **1** cup canned, full-fat coconut milk
- **3/4** cup quinoa, rinsed well

- **1** tablespoon unsalted butter or coconut oil
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan over high heat, then reduce the heat to a simmer and add the tea. Simmer for 5 minutes, then strain out and discard the tea leaves, returning the liquid to the pan.
2. Stir in 1 tablespoon of the maple syrup, then add the pear pieces. Simmer, uncovered, until they are easily pierced with a fork, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer the poached pear pieces to two serving bowls and pour 1 cup of the remaining tea mixture into a heatproof measuring cup, discarding the rest (or pouring it into your favorite mug).
3. Return the 1 cup of tea to the saucepan. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon maple syrup along with the coconut milk, quinoa, butter, cinnamon, vanilla, and salt. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and cook until the quinoa is tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Taste and adjust with more vanilla or maple syrup to your liking. Serve immediately over the poached pears.

RITUAL

PRACTICE ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

Alternate nostril breathing (*nadi shodhana,* which means “clearing the channels of circulation”) originates from Ayurvedic medicine and yoga traditions. According to scientific studies, it can boost energy, creativity, and insight, and it has been said to help reduce anxiety and lower heart rate thanks to its ability to activate the parasympathetic nervous system. It can also improve respiratory function, attention, and fine-motor coordination. Additionally, alternate nostril breathing is thought to harmonize the two hemispheres of the brain, granting balanced physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Because your two brain hemispheres are the most communicative during the menstrual phase, alternate nostril breathing is an especially powerful practice during this time.

There are different styles of alternate nostril breathing, but the main intention is to create balance and regulate airflow through the nasal passages. Here is one easy practice: Using your right thumb, softly close your right nostril, then inhale slowly and naturally through your left nostril. Before you release the breath, let go of your right nostril and use your right ring finger to close your left nostril. Then release the breath slowly and naturally through your right nostril. Keeping your left nostril closed, breathe in through your right nostril. Hold the breath,

close your right nostril, and release the breath through your left nostril. This counts as one round.

As with most breathing exercises, you can continue until you are ready to stop. Watch for heightened sensations, such as coolness as you breathe in and warmth as you exhale. Be prepared for a floating sensation, as though everything around you is dissipating. Your body begins to feel subtle and soft, like smoke hanging in the air.

BREAKFAST

Adobo Tofu Breakfast Tacos

Makes 2–3 servings
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

These babies are made with tofu, which contains phytoestrogen (plant estrogen). This compound has weak estrogen-like effects on the body, working to prevent PMS, lighten periods, and protect estrogen receptors from harmful endocrine disruptors such as xenoestrogens. Pair these tacos with the Avocado-Jalapeño Dressing from our Southwest Chicken Salad and you may be inspired to grab a friend and book a ticket to Oaxaca.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** (14-ounce) block extra-firm tofu
- **2** tablespoons avocado oil
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **1/4** cup adobo sauce

- **¼** cup nutritional yeast
- **1** teaspoon ground cumin
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **1** small red bell pepper, sliced
- **½** medium yellow onion, sliced
- **2** cups roughly chopped spinach
- **8** corn tortillas
- *For serving (optional):* salsa or Avocado-Jalapeño Dressing

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Press the tofu by wrapping it in a paper towel or a clean tea towel and setting it on a rimmed plate. Place a cutting board on top of the tofu and weight it down with a book or a couple of cans. Allow to sit for 15 minutes, then drain. Cut into ¼-inch cubes.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the tofu and cook for 10 minutes, tossing the pieces halfway through. Add the garlic, adobo sauce, nutritional yeast, cumin, and salt. Stir and mash the tofu into small crumbles using a wooden spoon or a potato masher. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes longer. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your preference.
3. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat. Add the bell pepper and onion, and sauté, stirring occasionally, until they begin to

soften, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the spinach and cook until the spinach is just wilted, about 2 minutes.

4. Warm the tortillas in a dry, hot pan or under the broiler for 2 to 3 minutes. Place the warm tortillas on plates in stacks of two, and divide the tofu and veggie mixture among them. Top with your favorite salsa or the Avocado-Jalapeño Dressing.

BREAKFAST

Sweet Potato, Kale, and Beet Lentil Hash

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

This is a nourishing dish for the menstrual phase that is as pretty as it is satisfying. Its orange, deep green, and rosy red colors are a sight for sore eyes. Both beets and lentils benefit us during our periods by supplying a healthy share of magnesium and iron to help restore levels to normal after bleeding. Throw in some poached eggs and call it breakfast. It's a work of art in more ways than one.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **½** medium yellow onion, diced
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **1½** cups peeled and finely diced sweet potato
- **1** cup peeled and finely diced beets
- **1½** teaspoons kosher salt
- **1** teaspoon paprika

- **½** teaspoon ground cumin
- **¼** teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- **1½** cups vegetable or chicken broth
- **¾** cup dried red lentils, rinsed
- **3** cups roughly chopped kale, loosely packed
- Freshly ground black pepper
- *For serving (optional):* poached eggs and salsa

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Toss in the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.
2. Add the sweet potato, beets, salt, paprika, cumin, and cayenne pepper, and stir to combine. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Stir in the broth and lentils, then cover the pan. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the beets and sweet potatoes are tender and easily pierced with a fork, 20 to 25 minutes.
4. Add the kale and stir to combine. Cover and cook for 1 to 2 minutes to allow the greens to wilt. Remove from the heat.
5. Add black pepper to taste and serve the hash immediately, on its own or with poached eggs and your favorite salsa. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

RITUAL

BE VULNERABLE

To be strong, you must be vulnerable. And if there ever were a phase that ignites vulnerability — and power — it's the menstrual phase. When you're on your period, you can feel a bit like an exposed nerve — sensitive, raw, and increasingly aware. There is a graceful warrior within who bleeds, never doubting or fearing her potential. When uncertain or uncomfortable, the warrior rages, and she feels — she embraces being "too much" in society's eyes, wearing it like a scarlet letter on her breast, brave and ignited with the values and beliefs in her life that make up her truth. She returns to the home inside of her — a grounded space that is made of sturdy walls and a strong foundation — because of her belief and trust, both in herself and in the process. It is her belief in self that allows her to imperfectly stand in the phases the same way she does the change of the seasons — with acceptance.

During this phase, you are asked to use your increased openness, to embrace vulnerability and run with her instead of running from her. Share your feelings with a partner or friend, write a poem, journal, create for creation's sake, or schedule a slot on your calendar for a cry. One ritual we love is to personify our emotions or our inner wild woman. Meet vulnerability — what does she (or he or they) have to say? What colors does she don? Where

does she live? Is it hot or cold? What textures does she find? Tapping into your creativity and acknowledging what you're feeling can reignite the strength that lives within the belly of vulnerability.

LUNCH/DINNER

Rosemary and Roasted Garlic Butternut Squash Soup

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

This soup was inspired by the bounty and flavors of winter and is extra delicious when paired with a thick slice of sourdough bread. Rosemary and roasted garlic are the best of friends, elevating almost any dish and providing body and soul nourishment on a deep level. Butternut squash supports us by delivering beta-carotene, a precursor to vitamin A, which promotes skin health through its antioxidant properties. The coconut milk and butter supply a healthy dose of hormone-supportive fats.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** medium butternut squash, halved and seeded
- **2** tablespoons melted butter or extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- **1** small head garlic
- **3** small red potatoes, diced
- **½** medium yellow onion, sliced

- **1 ½** cups canned, full-fat coconut milk (including the cream)
- **1** cup vegetable or chicken broth
- **2** tablespoons red wine vinegar
- **1** tablespoon dried rosemary

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Brush the flesh of the squash with 1 tablespoon of the butter and generously sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place the squash on a large baking sheet, flesh-side down.
3. Peel the loose papery layers from the garlic head and cut off the top ¼ inch so the cloves are exposed. Rub the top of the garlic head with 1 teaspoon of the butter and wrap in aluminum foil. Place the wrapped garlic on the baking sheet, next to the squash.
4. Bake the squash and garlic for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the squash is easily pierced with a fork.
5. Meanwhile, fill a large pot with water and bring to a boil over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of salt to the pot of boiling water and add the potatoes. Return to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium and cook the potatoes until they are easily pierced with a fork, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain the potatoes and set aside.
6. While the potatoes cook, place the remaining 2 teaspoons butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Allow the

pan to heat up, then add the onions. Sauté until the onions become fragrant and translucent, 3 to 5 minutes.

7. Remove the squash and garlic from the oven. Use a large spoon to scrape the squash flesh out of the skin into a large pot (discard the skin or save to make vegetable broth). Remove the roasted garlic by squeezing from the bottom — the cloves will easily pop out! Place the roasted cloves in the pot.

8. Add the cooked potatoes and sautéed onions to the pot. Stir in the coconut milk, broth, vinegar, and rosemary. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Using an immersion blender, blend the soup. Alternatively, transfer all the ingredients to a blender and blend on low until smooth. Feel free to add more broth if you enjoy a thinner soup. Serve immediately. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 1 week or in the freezer for 4 to 6 months.

LUNCH/DINNER

Red Wine Braised Beef Short Ribs and Lentils

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 2 1/2 hours

This is a warm, hearty, sticks-to-your-bones, sitting-by-the-fireplace type of meal. Can you feel it yet? This dish boasts copious amounts of iron from the beef and lentils and would pair well with a fresh salad to cleanse the palate. It's a classic dish with so much timeless charm; you'll be welcoming it back for seasons to come.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **4** meaty beef short ribs (1 1/2–2 pounds)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- **1/2** medium yellow onion, diced
- **3** small carrots, diced
- **4** celery stalks, thinly sliced
- **4** garlic cloves, minced

- **1½** cups dry red wine (Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Pinot Noir are good options)
- **3** cups beef broth
- **2** sprigs rosemary
- **1** bay leaf
- **1** cup dried red lentils, rinsed
- **½** lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place an ovenproof pot with a tight-fitting lid, such as a Dutch oven, over medium-high heat. Add the oil. Generously season the short ribs with salt and pepper on all sides. Once the oil is shimmering, place the ribs in the pot, taking care not to overcrowd them. Sear on all sides, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Using tongs, remove the short ribs and set aside on a plate. Leave the meat drippings in the pot.
2. Reduce the heat to medium and add the onion, carrots, and celery. Sauté for 5 minutes, stirring often. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.
3. Add the wine and return the short ribs to the pot, nestling the ribs within the vegetables and wine. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer until the wine has reduced by half, about 20 minutes. Turn off the heat and add 2 cups of the broth, the rosemary, and the bay leaf, giving the mixture a gentle stir.
4. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

5. Transfer the pot to the oven and braise for 1 ½ hours. Remove the pot from the oven, stir in the lentils and the remaining 1 cup broth, and braise for 30 minutes longer.

6. When the ribs are done, discard the rosemary sprig and bay leaf. Serve immediately by scooping a bit of lentils and vegetables onto each plate and placing a short rib on top. Finish with a squeeze of lemon juice.

RITUAL

TAKE A WALK IN NATURE

You may often feel sluggish or zapped while menstruating. You may feel lonely or sad or maybe even a bit restless. Nature (and best friends) are the best cures for all these ills. Studies have shown that when you get out into nature, take stock of your surroundings, and express gratitude for them, you not only have fewer feelings of envy and disconnection from the world around you, but you also experience improved physical health.

A great way to develop gratitude for the natural world around you is to take along a notebook on your walk and record what you find — flowers, smells, textures, and animals. To add to the experience, put on headphones and play music that feels right to you — create a soundtrack for your walk. Take a turn onto a new trail or into a part of town where you've never been, relying simply on your intuition to tell you where to turn next. Revel in what you

discover along the way. Cultivate joy for the opportunity to look at something familiar with new eyes. Grab a partner and get lost.

LUNCH/DINNER

Vegan Mac and Cheese with Roasted Broccoli

Makes 6–8 servings
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes

Boxed macaroni and cheese became a staple in Devon's house during her senior year of college, when veggies may not have had the utmost priority, and she still has fond memories of it. Adding broccoli seemed like a sure-fire way to add a healthy spin to the goodness of noodles and cheese! Enter our Vegan Mac and Cheese with Roasted Broccoli. It is easy, simple, incredibly satisfying, and — thanks to our dear old friend broccoli — contains vitamin B_6 to combat inflammation and support progesterone production.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** medium carrot, diced
- **1** medium sweet potato, peeled and diced
- **4** cups broccoli florets (about 2 medium crowns)
- **4** teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- **1** pound pasta (any shape; gluten-free if desired)
- **1** cup almond milk

- 1/3 cup nutritional yeast
- 3/4 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- *For serving (optional but recommended):* red chile flakes or hot sauce

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Pour about 2 inches of water into a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the carrot and sweet potato and boil until fork-tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup of the water, then drain the carrots and potato and let cool.
3. Place the broccoli on a large baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 teaspoons of the oil and sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Toss to coat. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, or until the broccoli is easily pierced with a fork and golden on the edges. Set aside.
4. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to the package directions. Strain and return to the large saucepan.
5. To make the “cheese” sauce, place the cooled carrots and sweet potatoes in a high-powered blender, then add the almond milk, nutritional yeast, vinegar, garlic powder, black pepper, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and the remaining 2 teaspoons

oil. Blend on high until smooth. Taste and add more seasonings as needed.

6. Pour the sauce into the pan with the pasta and place over medium-low heat. Toss in the broccoli and stir well. Heat until everything has warmed, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve immediately, with chile flakes or hot sauce, if desired. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for 3 to 4 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Teriyaki Salmon Bowl with Carrots and Bok Choy

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

Salmon is a nutritional powerhouse. Its high content of omega-3 fatty acids helps decrease the production of inflammatory prostaglandins (the little buggers that lead to painful cramps) and therefore reduce overall inflammation. This is particularly desired during the menstrual phase, when inflammation is heightened and our painful, pesky symptoms are likely paying a visit. This teriyaki salmon bowl is a go-to for long days that call for a quick, deeply and soulfully nourishing meal. For a bit more fun, change up the vegetables for whatever is in season or in your fridge.

SAUCE

- **¼** cup liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **2** tablespoons water
- **1** teaspoon sesame oil
- **1** teaspoon rice vinegar

- **1** teaspoon sriracha (optional)

BOWL

- **1 ½** cups brown rice
- **3** cups vegetable broth
- **¾** pound salmon fillet
- **1** tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons avocado oil
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** cup chopped unsalted raw cashews
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- **2** large carrots, thinly sliced into half-moons
- **3** cups thinly sliced bok choy (about ½ of a large head)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the sauce, whisk together the liquid aminos, maple syrup, water, sesame oil, vinegar, and sriracha, if using, in a small mixing bowl. Set aside.
2. To make the salmon bowl, combine the rice and broth in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed. Alternatively, combine the rice and broth in a rice cooker and cook according to the manufacturer's directions.

3. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.

4. Place the salmon on the prepared baking sheet, skin-side down, and rub with 2 teaspoons of the avocado oil and the salt. Bake, uncovered, for 4 to 6 minutes per ½-inch thickness, or until the fish reaches an internal temperature of 145°F (63°C) and is opaque and easily flakes when pierced with a fork. Cut the cooked salmon into bite-size pieces, removing bones and skin as you go.

5. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon avocado oil in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Once the oil is hot, add the cashews, garlic, and ginger, and sauté, stirring frequently, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Toss in the carrots and bok choy, and sauté, stirring occasionally, until the carrots begin to soften, 5 minutes longer.

6. Add the salmon and teriyaki sauce to the skillet with the veggies, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 5 minutes. Serve immediately over the rice. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

RITUAL

BEFRIEND PLANTS

When you're on your period, estrogen decreases (lowering the "happy hormone" serotonin along with it) and creative energy is at bay. This is a great time to get outside and put your hands in the soil, to remind yourself of how

intrinsically connected we all are to nature. Studies have shown that the physical element of gardening can boost serotonin and the feel-good hormone dopamine and that *Mycobacterium vaccae* bacteria in the soil also trigger a release of serotonin, which can further reduce anxiety.

Don't have space for a garden? That's okay. Bring home that plant you keep eyeing in your local garden shop and tell it every day how much you love it. If you don't have room for a houseplant, take a walk and literally stop to smell the roses . . . or jasmine . . . or whatever else is blooming in your neighborhood. Pick your favorite flower in season, buy those seeds, or adopt that succulent, then create your own little garden shrine.

LUNCH/DINNER

Slow Cooker Sweet Potato Chili

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 4–5 hours

When we think of simple warm and hearty meals, chili is certainly at the top of the list. As you transition into the menstrual phase when mood swings and irritability are common, it's crucial that you maintain balanced blood sugar. This vegetarian chili is packed with complex carbohydrates, fiber, and protein to keep you feeling fuller longer and avoid any spikes and crashes in blood sugar. Bonus? It freezes well. Make a big batch of this, freeze some for later, and nestle into your period with some cozy eats.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **½** medium yellow onion, diced
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **½** small jalapeño, seeded and minced
- **1** red bell pepper, diced
- **1** small sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- **1** (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes

- **1½** cups cooked black beans
- **1½** cups cooked kidney beans
- **¾** cup vegetable broth
- **½** cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- **2** tablespoons tomato paste
- **1** tablespoon plus **1** teaspoon chili powder
- **1** tablespoon ground cumin
- **2** teaspoons ground cinnamon
- **2** teaspoons kosher salt
- **1** teaspoon coconut sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the garlic and jalapeño, and cook for 1 minute longer, stirring often. Transfer to a slow cooker.
2. Add the bell pepper, sweet potato, tomatoes, black beans, kidney beans, broth, corn, tomato paste, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon, salt, and sugar to the slow cooker and stir well. Cook for 4 to 5 hours on low. Taste and adjust the seasonings as needed. Serve warm. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

LUNCH/DINNER

Steak and Zucchini Noodle Bowl

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

This noodle bowl is full of vitamin C, thanks to the zucchini, and iron, thanks to the grass-fed beef. Cashews, which boast ample magnesium, zinc, and iron, add crunch and help refresh the body's mineral stores while serving as building blocks for progesterone and estrogen. Hip hip hooray for noodles!

INGREDIENTS

- **3** teaspoons avocado oil
- **¾** pound steak (tender cut such as sirloin), cubed
- **5** cups spiralized zucchini (about 3 medium zucchini)
- **⅓** cup thinly sliced scallions
- **4** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** tablespoon liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **1** teaspoon pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon chili garlic sauce
- **1** teaspoon lime juice
- **½** cup chopped raw cashews

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat 2 teaspoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the steak and cook to your desired doneness, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the cubes to a clean plate.
2. Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in the skillet over medium heat. Toss in the zucchini noodles, scallions, and garlic, and cook, tossing the vegetables occasionally, until the zucchini begins to soften and give off moisture, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, whisk together the liquid aminos, maple syrup, chili garlic sauce, and lime juice in a small bowl. Pour the sauce over the zucchini noodles and toss to coat.
4. Return the steak to the pan and allow everything to warm, 1 to 2 minutes, then remove from the heat. Stir in the cashews and serve immediately. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 days (the zucchini noodles don't hold up well over time).

SIDE DISH

Cucumber-Sesame Seaweed Salad

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

This is a take on a staple favorite and usual order from our local sushi spot. Seaweed is deeply nourishing during the menstrual phase, as it helps replenish both iron and zinc — two essential minerals that decline during our periods. Zinc deficiencies can lead to irregular periods, whereas adequate zinc levels can help remedy acne by killing bacteria and reducing inflammation. Serve this as a side dish or as a topping to a stir-fry or steaming bowl of ramen. Dive on in.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** ounce dried wakame seaweed, cut into 1/4-inch strips
- **1** medium carrot, julienned (about 1/2 cup)
- **1/2** medium cucumber, julienned (about 1/2 cup)
- **1/4** cup sesame seeds
- **2** scallions, thinly sliced
- **1** tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
- **1** garlic clove, minced
- **2 1/4** teaspoons liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **2** teaspoons rice vinegar

- **1½** teaspoons minced fresh ginger
- **1** teaspoon sesame oil
- **1** teaspoon pure maple syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash the seaweed under cold water and soak it in a large bowl for 8 to 10 minutes. Strain it in a sieve and push out the water. Lay it flat to dry on a clean tea or paper towel for about 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, combine the carrot, cucumber, sesame seeds, scallions, cilantro, garlic, liquid aminos, vinegar, ginger, oil, and maple syrup in a large mixing bowl. Add the seaweed and toss well to coat. Serve immediately. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for 1 to 2 days.

Spotlight on Iodine

Iodine rarely gets the attention it deserves. It supports your thyroid's hormone production, which in turn supports your metabolism, body temperature, menstrual cycle, and so much more. Iodine also desensitizes your estrogen receptors, meaning that you are less likely to feel negatively impacted by the ebbs and flows of estrogen during perimenopause. Seaweed is a great natural source of iodine. You can also find high amounts of iodine in cod, dairy, and, of course, iodized salt.

SIDE DISH

Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Maple Pecans

Makes 4–6 servings
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

This recipe is for all the people who think they don't like Brussels sprouts. Our sprouts are crispy and have just the right balance of sweet and salty (swoon). These little descendants of cabbage pack a punch by providing antioxidants in the form of vitamin C, beta-carotene, and vitamin B_6, plus cancer-fighting compounds known as glucosinolates. We encourage you to bring this dish to your next holiday gathering and convert your friends and families into loving these little sprouts. They are that good.

INGREDIENTS

- **4** cups Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- **1** cup pecans, roughly chopped
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **3** tablespoons coconut oil, melted

- **1** tablespoon pure maple syrup
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Use a large cast-iron skillet or line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. Combine the Brussels sprouts, pecans, and garlic in a large mixing bowl. Add the oil, maple syrup, salt, and pepper, and stir to combine. Spread the mixture onto the prepared baking sheet in an even layer, leaving some space between sprouts so they crisp up, rather than steaming and becoming mushy.
3. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes, flipping the sprouts halfway through to ensure even cooking, or until they are easily pierced with a fork and the outer leaves begin to brown and crisp. Serve immediately. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

RITUAL

GIVE YOURSELF A TAROT OR AFFIRMATION CARD READING

The menstrual phase is about shedding layers of expectations and “shoulds” and instead meeting yourself with compassion and nonjudgment. During this period, you are asked to embrace your innate wisdom and intuition and to look at things through the eyes of the witness. Tarot or affirmation card readings can be a fun, playful way to interact with your intuition and the unseen world around you.

Tarot cards tell the story of “the fool’s journey” — a metaphor for the journey that is life. Each Major Arcana card within the deck stands for a stage on that journey or a life experience that a person must accept to embrace his, her, or their wholeness. The history of tarot spans many different beliefs, religions, and ethnicities, but the cards have universally become a symbol for our intuition and subconscious. Today, there are many different takes on the classic tarot, making it easier to find a deck that really speaks to you.

Listening to your gut or intuition isn’t trendy or woo-woo — people through millennia have been following and cultivating their intuition. Reading tarot cards is about staying open-minded, trusting something bigger than your ego, and opening yourself up to experiencing something new.

To give yourself a reading, choose a question or situation you’d like to learn more about. When you’re ready, close your eyes, release any judgments, and pull a card. Focus on the image and what stands out to you — give this as

much weight as the words that go with the image. If you want to do a more in-depth reading, you can pull any number of cards and order them in whichever way feels natural. Three cards could represent past, present, and future, or perhaps you pull four cards to look into the next few seasons (or menstrual phases!) and what they have in store. Trust your intuition and childlike curiosity — they always illuminate.

SNACK

Roasted Beet Hummus

Makes about 3 cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

We love beets for their beauty and what they do for our bodies. They are full of betalains, a class of antioxidants that support blood and cardiovascular health. They also contain folate, an essential nutrient for women of childbearing age, as it helps protect against neural tube defects during pregnancy. Both chickpeas and beets offer zinc as well. This hummus is the perfect sidekick for late-afternoon snacks or for dumping by the spoonful onto salads, sandwiches, and more. Plus that deep rouge is swoon-worthy. Hubba hummus.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** small beets, washed, trimmed, and cut in half
- **¼** cup plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- **3** cups cooked chickpeas
- **4** garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- **3** tablespoons tahini
- Juice of **1** lemon

- **1** teaspoon lemon zest
- **3–4** tablespoons cold water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Place the beets in a small shallow baking dish and coat with 2 teaspoons of the oil. Toss with a generous sprinkle of salt and pepper and place cut-side down in the dish. Add about ¼ inch of water to the dish and cover with aluminum foil.
3. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes, or until the beets are easily pierced with a fork. Transfer the beets to a plate or cutting board and let cool until you are able to handle them. Gently peel off and discard the skin (or add it to your veggie scrap bag).
4. Place the beets in a blender or food processor. Add the chickpeas, garlic, tahini, lemon juice, and lemon zest and the remaining ¼ cup oil. Process until chunky, scraping down the sides with a spatula as needed.
5. With the machine running on low, slowly pour in the cold water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the hummus comes together and is smooth and creamy. Add 1 ½ teaspoons salt plus pepper to taste, then blend on low until combined. Adjust the seasonings, if needed. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.

SNACK/SIDE DISH

Pumpkin and Flax Pesto

Makes 2 cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

This delicious and versatile pesto pairs well with crackers, pasta, or a plate of vegetables. Traditionally, pesto is prepared with flavorful basil, but switching up your greens (kale, spinach, and carrot tops make excellent alternatives) can be a ton of fun and just as delicious. Any leafy green you reach for will be a great source of antioxidants, which reduce inflammation by fighting free radicals, and they calm symptoms like headaches, breakouts, and cramps. Pumpkin seeds and flaxseed join the pesto party in this recipe with a dose of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids.

INGREDIENTS

- **6** cups packed fresh basil (or leafy green of your choice)
- **4** garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- **½** cup nutritional yeast
- **¼** cup raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- **2** tablespoons ground flaxseed
- **2** teaspoons lemon juice (from 1 small lemon)
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt

- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the basil, garlic, nutritional yeast, pumpkin seeds, flaxseed, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a food processor and process until chunky. Use a spatula to scrape down the sides as needed.
2. With the machine running on low, slowly drizzle in the oil until a smooth pesto begins to form. Add more oil if you like a thinner consistency. Season with more salt and pepper to taste, if desired. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

DESSERT

Chocolate-Avocado Mousse with Raspberry Compote

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Idle time: 1 hour

Succulent foods are good for the soul, especially during our periods. This dish is creamy, thanks to the avocado, and it provides both oleic and linoleic acid (hormone-supportive fats) along with a boost of vitamins K, E, and B_6. Cacao adds a deep chocolate edge and helps reduce cramps, relax muscles, and relieve constipation by supplying magnesium.

COMPOTE

- **1** cup fresh or frozen raspberries
- **1** tablespoon pure maple syrup
- **¼** teaspoon vanilla extract

MOUSSE

- **2** ripe avocados, halved and pit removed

- **¼** cup coconut cream
- **¼** cup canned, full-fat coconut milk
- **3** tablespoons unsweetened cacao powder or cocoa powder
- **3** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the compote, combine the raspberries, maple syrup, and vanilla in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, stirring well and often with a wooden spoon and mashing the berries to create a thick mixture. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and let cool.
2. To make the mousse, use a spoon to scoop the avocado flesh from the outer skin into a large mixing bowl. Add the coconut cream, coconut milk, cacao powder, maple syrup, vanilla, and salt. Using an electric handheld mixer, whip on medium speed until well combined, scraping down the sides with a spatula. Then turn the mixer to high and whip until light, fluffy, and smooth, approximately 2 minutes.
3. To assemble, set out two widemouthed cups, jars, or ramekins. Pour ¼ cup of mousse into each container and smooth with the spatula. Add 1 tablespoon of compote to each and smooth. Repeat, alternating layers of mousse and compote, until you have used them all. Refrigerate for 1

hour to set, then serve immediately. The mousse may become grainy if stored overnight.

Our Compote Style

Traditionally, a compote is a dessert of fruit cooked in a sweet syrup. Our style is to let the fruit itself shine by adding just a hint of maple syrup and vanilla. Enjoy!

DESSERT

Hazelnut Brownies

Makes 16 brownies
Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes

This recipe is as decadent, moist, and gooey as it is nutritious. These brownies contain boron and magnesium — two nutrients that help stave off troublesome period symptoms. Boron is found in hazelnuts, and its anti-inflammatory properties can combat the severity and duration of menstrual pain. These are magical brownies for the menstrual phase. Dig in.

INGREDIENTS

- **⅔** cup dark chocolate chips or chunks (70% cacao or higher)
- **5** tablespoons avocado oil or coconut oil
- **⅓** cup coconut sugar
- **⅓** cup pure maple syrup

- **2** eggs
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **⅔** cup almond flour
- **2** tablespoons unsweetened cacao powder or cocoa powder
- **½** teaspoon baking soda
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¾** cup chopped raw hazelnuts

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper or grease it with a bit of extra oil.
2. Place the chocolate chips in a microwavable bowl. Melt the chocolate in a microwave at high power for about 1 minute, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until smooth and shiny.
3. Whisk together the oil, sugar, maple syrup, eggs, and vanilla in a small bowl until well combined. Pour in the melted chocolate and stir well.
4. Whisk together the flour, cacao powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl. Add the chocolate mixture and mix with a spatula until smooth. Gently fold in the hazelnuts.
5. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes, or until the edges are set and the center is still ever-so-slightly underdone (the center will set as it cools). Let cool for at least 5 minutes

before slicing and serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for 3 to 4 days.

DESSERT

Triple Berry Chia Pudding

Makes 3–4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Idle time: 4–6 hours

Triple the berries means triple the goodness. Strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries are high in vitamin C, which helps us better absorb iron, and soluble and insoluble fiber, which keeps things moving, feeds the gut microflora, and eliminates toxins. Chia seeds make the texture as groovy as the taste, plus they add an extra dose of soluble fiber along with omega-3 fatty acids and zinc. Get creative and toss in whatever berries are in season or are your favorites — there's no wrong way to pudding.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** (13.5-ounce) can full-fat coconut milk
- **¼** cup fresh or frozen strawberries, plus extra for topping
- **¼** cup fresh or frozen raspberries, plus extra for topping
- **¼** cup fresh or frozen blueberries, plus extra for topping
- **1** tablespoon pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon lemon juice
- **½** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **¼** teaspoon ground cinnamon

- Pinch of kosher salt
- **6** tablespoons chia seeds
- Granola, for topping (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the coconut milk, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, maple syrup, lemon juice, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt in a high-powered blender or food processor and mix until smooth.
2. Pour the berry mixture into a medium mixing bowl and add the chia seeds. Whisk until well combined.
3. Pour the pudding into an airtight container and refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours, or until it has thickened. Serve chilled, topped with extra berries and granola, if using.

RITUAL

DO A CANDLELIT MEDITATION

Do you ever find yourself at the end of a long day in total quiet? You breathe in, you breathe out. The noises that pass outside knit themselves together, and life begins to feel floaty — not quite here, but not too far away. Your insides soften, you feel deep acceptance, and peace emanates. That, in itself, is meditation.

Meditation is the act of sitting in silence, not letting your thoughts distract you from the present moment. It can be extremely hard to do, and circumstances don't always allow it. Our minds rarely quiet on cue. Moreover, we are often taught to "do" rather than to "be," so "doing nothing" can feel entirely foreign. Candlelit meditation is a great tool for people who have found meditation hard in the past but who want to find a simple way to practice stillness.

Focusing on an object may make it easier to quiet the mind. Common objects to focus on include your breath, feelings in your body, or sounds around you. Every time a thought comes to mind, return to the focus object. For candlelit meditation, the object you focus on is the flame — its flicker, movement, and color, and how it changes from second to second, much like your thoughts and the world around you change. You can either release your thought and come back to the flame, seeing what comes up, or you can recite an affirmation while focusing on that thought alone ("I am *amazing*"). This meditation can help move out old habits or stories that no longer support you and invite in fresh thoughts and desires.

DRINK

Vanilla-Cacao Elixir

Makes 1 serving
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 3 minutes

Our love for coffee runs deep. Although we still love a cup or two when the craving strikes, we find ourselves reaching for more grounding drinks during the menstrual phase, like this vanilla and cacao beverage. Cinnamon is a flirty little friend that can elevate any dish, savory or sweet. Research shows that cinnamon helps regulate blood sugar by improving sensitivity to the hormone insulin, which in turn enables the body to use glucose (sugar) more efficiently and prevent crashes. Ashwagandha (optional) helps the body adapt to stress, which is why it is known as an adaptogen. Fun fact: Ashwagandha is actually part of the nightshade family (like eggplant, peppers, and potatoes).

INGREDIENTS

- **1** cup coconut milk, from a carton
- **⅔** cup water
- **1** tablespoon unsweetened cacao powder or cocoa powder
- **1–2** teaspoons pure maple syrup, depending on preference

- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **1** teaspoon ground ashwagandha (optional)
- **½** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch of kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the coconut milk and water together in a small saucepan and place over medium-low heat. Bring to a simmer, then cook for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Combine the cacao powder, maple syrup, vanilla, ashwagandha (if using), cinnamon, and salt in a blender. Carefully transfer the hot milk mixture to the blender and blend on high until frothy, about 1 minute. Taste and add more maple syrup, if desired. Serve immediately in your favorite mug and enjoy.

RITUAL

PRACTICE YOGA

Yoga consists of physical, mental, and spiritual practices, though most Westerners today know only the physical aspect. Yoga postures, known as asanas, were originally seated postures intended to facilitate the practice of meditation. Yoga is an ever-evolving practice. It's been thrust from its roots in Tantra and Hatha yoga in India and

reflects the values of the societies in which yoga is being practiced. Because of this, and as with meditation, we encourage you to practice yoga in a way that feels comfortable and natural for you. Your yoga practice will ebb and flow with your emotions, your energy, your needs, and the world around you. Many refer to yoga as a practice because you come to your mat each time with a unique point of view that is different from the time before. And because of this, we can learn something new with each posture and each breath.

During the menstrual phase, when you are most emotional and tired, it's helpful to have a physical practice like yoga. It's been found that women who performed yoga — specifically Cobra, Cat, and Fish poses — during their cycle had significantly less-intense and shorter bouts of pain than women who did not. Don't have a space in your home that feels yoga friendly? Opt for the outdoors during the warmer months, or head to a studio during the colder season. Revel in how the poses make your body feel, and how they bring you closer to the present moment.

DRINK

Garlic Thyme Chicken Bone Broth

Makes 6 cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 6–8 hours

Hello, winter. Hello, bone broth. Warming drinks and meals are key during the menstrual phase at any time of year, since traditional Chinese medicine says that your body is settling into the season of winter during this phase. Garlic is famous for its antibacterial and antiviral properties due to the nutrient allicin, so doubling up on your garlic during cold and flu season can support your immune system. Pro tip: Crush or chop your garlic and let it sit for 5 to 10 minutes before adding it to the pot to cook. This stimulates enzyme activity and activates the bacteria-fighting potential of allicin.

INGREDIENTS

- **6** cups water
- **1 ½ –2** pounds chicken bones (or 1 whole chicken carcass)
- **10** garlic cloves, crushed
- **½** medium lemon, quartered
- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **8** sprigs fresh or dried thyme

- **2** bay leaves
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the water, chicken bones, garlic, lemon, oil, thyme, bay leaves, and salt in a large stockpot and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 6 to 8 hours. Alternatively, combine the ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on high for 12 hours.
2. Strain the broth and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days or up to 6 months in the freezer.

2

Welcome Your Creative Bloom

THE FOLLICULAR PHASE

The follicular phase, which starts right after bleeding and lasts up until the ovulation phase (a.k.a. the “fertile window”), is one of the least talked-about phases in the menstrual cycle. However, it’s easily one of the most important parts of the cycle and where a lot of the magic happens to set the stage for ovulation.

During the follicular phase, which is roughly 7 to 10 days long, the body prepares for what will become a healthy, strong, and viable egg come ovulation. During this phase, it is extremely important that you support your liver and gut microbiome to help flush excess estrogen. Too much estrogen can cause hormonal symptoms and conditions ranging from polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS — a hormonal disorder common among women of reproductive age that can cause infrequent or prolonged periods, excess male hormone levels, and failure to regularly release eggs) to heavy periods, breast tenderness, and PMS symptoms. This chapter explores how you can detox excess estrogen through your gut microbiome.

In traditional Chinese medicine, the follicular phase corresponds with spring. New life (the growing follicle and egg) begins to emerge, and energy builds. This is a time to shake off the stagnant energy of winter and prepare to create and cultivate.

Spring

"Tiptoe," the ground whispers, "for the dew is shy."
Blades of grass relax underneath your feet as you walk the newly sprinkled pathway, carefully placing one foot
in front of the other.
The feeling of spring pirouettes from the trees, causing your weightless arms to extend for what feels like miles,
with miles more to go.
And all you can think is,
"I am awake."
"I am alive."

FOLLICULAR PHASE SNAPSHOT

Season

SPRING

Season

HALF MOON

Archetypes

GODDESS, MAIDEN

THE BASICS

- The uterine lining has been shed in the previous phase.
- Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) stimulated several follicles to grow (hence the term *follicular phase*), and now one follicle has won the race and become dominant. It yields the healthiest, most viable egg out of the bunch and continues to grow.
- The growing follicle releases the hormone estrogen. Estrogen's role in the body is to build; the uterine lining begins to rebuild and become strong again during the follicular phase.
- When the follicle reaches its peak growth, estrogen spikes and causes luteinizing hormone (LH) to be released from the brain. LH sends a signal to the ovaries that ovulation is ready to occur, and the next phase (ovulation) begins.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

An increase in estrogen leads to feeling more creative, expressive, focused, and outgoing.

HOW YOUR LIFESTYLE IS AFFECTED

Big plans and dreams come into focus. Because your creative problem-solving abilities are at their peak in this phase, it's prime time to accomplish the most mentally taxing tasks. You know that mental/physical/emotional health day you've been putting off? Add it to your calendar during this phase so you can recover from the brain drain, and while you're at it, schedule any other appointments, days to dream, and moments to meander that have been escaping you lately.

You are also blooming emotionally now, so this is a good time to plan a date with the lover in your life or with yourself. And your physical energy is increasing, which means it's a great time to try new physical challenges or ways to move your body. Invite the goddess in and move with her.

PAY ATTENTION TO

- ✶ Daydreams. Let your mind run free. Now's the time to plant metaphorical seeds.

- How your body wants to move. There is no judgment here, only grooviness.
- The urge to pamper. Give in.

HOW ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS AFFECT YOUR ESTROGEN LEVEL

As the follicle and egg grow during the follicular phase, estrogen increases. Estrogen is essential to your reproductive and overall health, but you can experience too much of it.

An abundance of endocrine disruptors in your body (like BPA, BPS, and phthalates, those hormone-mimicking chemicals we detailed in Chapter 1), when combined with the rise in natural estrogen during the follicular phase, may lead to problems ranging from fatigue, weight gain, and trouble concentrating to low sex drive, irregular menstrual cycles, hair loss, adrenal fatigue, and breast cancer. It's important to limit your exposure to endocrine disruptors and promote your body's natural detoxification and elimination pathways.

SWAPS TO GREATLY REDUCE EXPOSURE

- Replace plastic dishware in your house with glass, such as glass straws, glass cups, and glass containers for storing food.

- ✶ Switch to (or make your own) naturally derived cleaning products, such as those featuring white vinegar, baking soda, or plant compounds.
- ✶ Utilize the Environmental Working Group's various guides to learn about ingredient and toxicity concerns in sunscreens, cosmetics, and household cleaning products.
- ✶ Choose organic foods when possible, as some pesticides are endocrine disrupting. If buying organic isn't feasible, thoroughly wash produce and peel fruits and vegetables that are on the Dirty Dozen list (check the Environmental Working Group's website for the list).

FOODS FOR NOURISHMENT

During the follicular phase, the goal is to detoxify your body, ridding it of excess estrogen. You do that through supporting your gut microbiome and your liver. We'll emphasize liver detoxification in the next chapter, devoted to the ovulation phase, so here we focus on the gut microbiome. A healthy microbiome will promote the proper elimination of excess estrogen (natural or foreign endocrine disruptors) through bowel movements.

It's especially crucial that you detoxify excess estrogen during the perimenopausal years when estrogen levels are higher and fluctuate wildly, causing the common symptoms of headaches, mood swings, sleep problems, and heavy periods. The foods we mention below, as well as those we outline in

Chapter 3, can help promote detoxification and eliminate excess estrogen.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Using lighter cooking methods, such as lightly steaming and sautéing, that break down food so the gut digests it more easily
- Incorporating sprouted foods, fermented foods, and prebiotics into your daily rhythm

Sprouted Foods

In general, sprouted foods are exactly what they sound like: seeds, grains, or legumes that have been soaked in water and allowed to sprout (a process that happens in nature when a seed is ready to grow). Sprouted foods are easier to digest and reduce the amount of phytic acid (an antinutrient that can inhibit the absorption of minerals) within the food. Sprouted nuts are common as well and appear in a few of our recipes. While they, too, are soaked for several hours to increase digestibility, they don't actually produce a sprout. You can purchase sprouted foods at most grocery stores or make your own at home. Here are some of the most common sprouted foods:

- **SEEDS:** alfalfa, clover, mustard, hulled pumpkin, broccoli, and sunflower
- **GRAINS:** oats, rice, quinoa, and buckwheat

- ✶ **LEGUMES:** chickpeas, lentils, and beans
- ✶ **NUTS:** almonds, cashews, walnuts, and Brazil nuts

TO MAKE YOUR OWN SPROUTED SEEDS, GRAINS, AND LEGUMES, soak the raw versions in fresh water for 8 to 12 hours, then drain well and rinse. Repeat until sprouts form. You can eat the sprouts when they first begin to form, or you can continue soaking, rinsing, and draining until the sprouts are about 2 inches long. Refrigerate sprouts in an airtight container lined with a clean tea towel; they will keep for a few days.

TO MAKE YOUR OWN SPROUTED NUTS, simply soak raw, unsalted nuts in fresh water for 8 to 12 hours, then drain. Use them to make nut milks or dehydrate them in the oven or a dehydrator until completely dry. Store in airtight containers in the refrigerator for up to 1 month to have them at the ready for various recipes.

TO MAKE SPROUTED ALMOND FLOUR, place your dehydrated sprouted almonds in a food processor and blend on high until a fine powder forms (1½ cups of sprouted almonds yields about 1 cup of almond flour). Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month. Prep double or triple batches and store for later to give your recipes an extra boost of nutrition.

Any recipe containing nuts, seeds, grains, or legumes can be made with the sprouted version if you desire.

RECIPES FOR SPROUTED FOODS

- *Dark Chocolate and Cherry Grain-Free Granola with Sprouted Walnuts*
- *Salt and Pepper Sprouted Almond Crackers*
- *Cranberry-Walnut Yogurt Cookies*

Fermented Foods

Fermented foods contain microorganisms called probiotics (good bacteria), which are essential for a healthy gut microflora. Probiotics help break down and eliminate excess hormones, support intestinal health, and reduce inflammation. While probiotic supplements are trendy and beneficial, let's not forget about all the delicious fermented foods that add extra flavor to meals while also providing a broader range of probiotic strains.

OUR FAVORITE FERMENTED FOODS

- Kimchi
- Sauerkraut
- Lacto-fermented pickles
- Miso
- Kombucha
- Yogurt
- Kefir

RECIPES FOR FERMENTED FOODS

- *Cinnamon Pear–Almond Butter Parfait with Toasted Pumpkin Seeds*
- *Spring Mix Salad with Roasted Chickpeas and Miso Pesto*
- *Chicken Fajitas with Honey-Chipotle Yogurt Sauce*
- *Zucchini and Kimchi Frittata*
- *Miso-Ginger Noodle Soup with Beef*
- *Sauerkraut*

Prebiotics

Probiotics often receive all the glory in the health and wellness world, but did you know that prebiotics are needed for probiotics' growth and overall health? Probiotics feed on prebiotics, breaking them down in the colon and using them for energy. On top of that, research suggests that prebiotics may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer and boost immune function.

The following foods offer a generous dose of prebiotics: apples, asparagus, avocados, bananas, chicory root, chives, dandelion greens, garlic, jicama, leeks, onions, peas, potato skins, and whole grains.

ABOVE: Rosemary Sausage Quiche with Apple Crust

RECIPES FOR PREBIOTIC-RICH FOODS

- *Buckwheat–Almond Banana Muffins*
- *Savory Millet Breakfast Bowl with Lemon-Garlic Tahini Sauce*

- *Rosemary Sausage Quiche with Apple Crust*
- *Vanilla Chai Overnight Oats*
- *Quinoa–Black Bean Beet Burger*
- *Spring Mix Salad with Roasted Chickpeas and Miso Pesto*
- *Chicken Fajitas with Honey-Chipotle Yogurt Sauce*
- *Zucchini and Kimchi Frittata*
- *Garlic Tempeh Tacos with Pineapple-Jalapeño Salsa*
- *Baked Salmon Cakes with Lemon-Dill Aioli*
- *Miso-Ginger Noodle Soup with Beef*
- *Oatmeal–Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk Bites*
- *Chili and Lime Kale Chips*

RITUAL

MAKE A STICKY NOTE WALL OF YOUR DREAMS

The follicular phase is all about awakening — feeling the stretch in your wide-open arms, pointing your toes, and rolling out your neck. It's been a deep and introspective winter, and now there is a call to forage and move. You can thank an increase in estrogen for this rising energy — the ground has been sown, and it's ripe for planting seeds.

Your dreams are asking to be acknowledged during this phase. Begin by setting aside time to brainstorm all the things you feel called to do and excited to accomplish.

Write them down in a notebook or on your computer. Oftentimes, we find a theme — our hearts know what they want — and it helps to pair together dreams or projects that support one another or fulfill a similar goal. From your list, choose a handful of dreams that are essential to your well-being. Write them on sticky notes and place them on a wall in your office, around your house, on the bathroom mirror, or in a notebook — anywhere you'll be reminded of them every so often. It is also fun and fulfilling to do this exercise with a partner or friend, as you may discover ways to support each other's dreams or reveal projects the two of you may want to work on together.

BREAKFAST

Buckwheat–Almond Banana Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

When you take your first bite of these muffins, close your eyes and savor the warmth of the cinnamon and the tinge of nuttiness from the buckwheat and almond butter. Finally, note how the ripe bananas and maple syrup give just a touch of sweetness. These muffins are perfect for a nourishing breakfast or a grounding nightcap. Buckwheat is a gluten-free whole grain and a great source of complex carbs. The hormones LH and FSH, which make their debut in the follicular phase, need complex carbs as their building blocks. Ready, set, bake!

INGREDIENTS

- **⅓** cup coconut oil, plus more for the pan
- **1** cup buckwheat flour
- **½** cup almond flour
- **1** tablespoon ground cinnamon
- **1** teaspoon baking powder
- **½** teaspoon baking soda

- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** cup almond butter
- **⅓** cup coconut sugar
- **⅓** cup pure maple syrup
- **2** very ripe bananas, mashed
- **1** egg
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Prepare a muffin pan by greasing with coconut oil or lining with paper cups.
2. Using a sifter or fine-mesh strainer, sift the buckwheat flour, almond flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt into a large mixing bowl. Whisk to combine.
3. Whisk together the remaining ⅓ cup oil with the almond butter, sugar, maple syrup, bananas, egg, and vanilla in a small bowl until well combined. Add to the flour mixture and mix with a spatula until just combined (overmixing will result in dense, dry muffins).
4. Using a ¼-cup measure, scoop the batter into the prepared muffin cups. Bake for 20 to 24 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes, then serve warm. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for 1 to 2 days or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

BREAKFAST

Savory Millet Breakfast Bowl with Lemon-Garlic Tahini Sauce

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

This is the dreamiest hearty breakfast for busy mornings, complete with grounding sweet potatoes and a slightly tangy sauce. The Swiss chard is lightly sautéed to make it easier for the gut to break it down, providing greater access to the chard's abundance of nutrients, including magnesium, iron, and zinc — three essential minerals that dipped during the menstrual phase. In addition to their gut-feeding prebiotics, avocados help our bodies transition into the ovulation phase by promoting cervical mucus production. It's a no-brainer breakfast (avoca-duh).

SAUCE

- **3** tablespoons water
- **2** tablespoons tahini
- **2** teaspoons lemon juice
- **1** garlic clove, minced
- Kosher salt

BOWLS

- **3** small sweet potatoes, diced
- **3** tablespoons avocado oil
- Kosher salt
- **½** cup millet
- **1** cup water
- **2** tablespoons unsalted butter
- **3** cups roughly chopped Swiss chard
- **1** garlic clove, minced
- **4** eggs
- **½** medium avocado, sliced
- **2** lemon wedges
- Freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the sauce, whisk together the water, tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and a pinch of salt in a small bowl until smooth. Taste, then adjust the seasoning as desired. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
3. To make the bowls, toss the potatoes with the oil and 1 teaspoon salt on a baking sheet, then spread them evenly. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, tossing the potatoes halfway through, until they are easily pierced with a fork.

4. Meanwhile, warm a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the millet and toast until fragrant and lightly golden, 3 to 4 minutes, stirring often. Add the water and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and add 1 tablespoon of the butter. Cover and simmer until all the liquid has been absorbed, about 15 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the millet to steam, covered, for 5 minutes longer, then fluff with a fork.

5. Melt the remaining 1 tablespoon butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Toss in the Swiss chard and garlic, and sauté until the garlic is fragrant and the chard has wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.

6. Cook your eggs to your liking. We love over-easy or poached eggs with this recipe — the runny yolk is too good!

7. To assemble the bowls, divide the roasted potatoes, millet, chard, eggs, and avocado slices between two bowls. Top each with a squeeze of lemon juice and some pepper. Whisk the lemon-garlic tahini sauce one more time and drizzle over the bowls. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

RITUAL

DREAM UP DATE ADVENTURES

With spring comes an overwhelming sense of seeing things from a fresh point of view. The newness is exciting and is a reminder of the life-death-life cycle within each

facet of our lives. Oftentimes, we can take our relationships for granted and fall into rhythms that feel familiar yet lackluster. The follicular phase reminds us that we can choose to create new rhythms.

Plan a date with your significant other or with yourself. Together with your partner or on your own, write down adventurous date ideas on little pieces of paper and add them to a jar or hat. Nothing is off-limits — nothing is "too little" or "too much." We're calling in abundance here and the feeling of being swept away by possibility. Then, during the ovulation phase, when sensuality is high and those summertime feels are under way, carry out one — or several — of your date ideas. For now, plant the seeds and choose wonder over practicality.

RITUAL

COMPILE A GROOVY GODDESS PLAYLIST

The goddess is a potent archetype during the follicular phase and can represent our budding power. How the goddess shows herself — the ways in which she moves, the energy she inhabits, and the path she chooses — is entirely up to you. Music is one way to tap into the goddess's power and celebrate your body, especially after the winter of the menstrual phase.

Dig up old albums that make you feel transported, or play your favorite song on repeat through headphones, focusing on different tones and notes that come to life when you're present with what's right in front of you. Invite the goddess in, and move with her when she joins. She's magic . . . and so are you.

BREAKFAST

Dark Chocolate and Cherry Grain-Free Granola with Sprouted Walnuts

Makes about 4 cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Crunchy, chewy, salty, sweet — this granola has it all. Most granolas are made with oats as a base, and while we love oats as much as the next person, swapping them out for nuts and seeds is a great way to change the flavors. The sprouted walnuts are gentler on your digestion than nonsprouted ones, while the dried cherries are a rich source of vitamin C. The cherries also contain flavonoids, which promote healthy collagen structures. Serve this granola with yogurt, with your choice of milk, or atop a smoothie (such as the Matcha Mango-Peach Smoothie Bowl). Cherry-o.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 1/2** cups sprouted walnuts, roughly chopped
- **1/3** cup shelled pistachios
- **1/4** cup whole flaxseeds

- **¼** cup hemp seeds
- **¼** cup coconut oil, melted
- **¼** cup pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅓** cup dried cherries
- **⅓** cup dark chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. Stir together the walnuts, pistachios, flaxseeds, hemp seeds, coconut oil, maple syrup, vanilla, and salt in a large mixing bowl until combined. Spread on the prepared baking sheet in one even layer.
3. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden and crispy, stirring halfway through to prevent burning. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 15 minutes.
4. Stir in the cherries and chocolate chips. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

BREAKFAST

Rosemary Sausage Quiche with Apple Crust

Makes 4–6 servings
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 35 minutes

Committing to making a quiche from scratch can feel like a huge endeavor. But this quiche is a breeze. It uses thin apple slices as the crust, which add a nice sweet touch to balance the savory flavors from the rosemary and sausage. Bonus: Apples are a great source of pectin, a type of soluble fiber that slows digestion, which gives the gut more time to eliminate harmful toxins and excess hormones that may build up during the follicular phase.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** teaspoons coconut oil, melted
- **1** Granny Smith apple, cored and quartered
- **1** teaspoon avocado oil
- **½** pound bulk breakfast sausage

- **½** medium yellow onion, diced
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
- **8** large eggs
- **¼** cup cream or almond milk
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅛** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Brush a 9-inch pie dish with 1 teaspoon of the coconut oil.
2. Slice the apple quarters into ⅛-inch-thick slices. Form the crust by placing the apple slices along the outer edge of the dish, rounded side up, overlapping the edges slightly. Once you have encircled the dish, continue to spiral the slices toward the center until the dish is covered. Gently brush the apples with the remaining 1 teaspoon coconut oil.

3. Bake the apple crust for 10 minutes, then set aside.
4. Meanwhile, heat the avocado oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the sausage and use a wooden spoon to break into crumbles. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sausage has browned and is no longer pink, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in the onion and sauté, stirring occasionally, until the onion is fragrant and has softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Toss in the garlic and rosemary, and sauté for 30 seconds longer. Remove from the heat.
5. Whisk together the eggs, cream, salt, and black pepper in a medium mixing bowl until fluffy and uniform in color. Stir in the sausage mixture, then pour the filling into the pie dish with the apple crust.

6. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool for 10 minutes before slicing and serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

RITUAL

REACH FOR LAVENDER

During perimenopause, our cortisol levels are on the rise and can make sleeping difficult. Lavender is a close friend, helping to calm the nervous system and promoting the increase of serotonin and dopamine (the happy hormones). You can keep a satchel of dried lavender next to your bed, diffuse lavender essential oil in your bedroom, or create your own lavender-scented spray. Dig into books and websites about essential oils and herbs, and notice which methods you feel called to explore. Allow yourself the space to be curious.

BREAKFAST

Vanilla Chai Overnight Oats

Makes 2–3 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Idle time: 8 hours

Are you the type of person who makes yourself a lovely cup of tea only to look at the clock and realize that you don't have time to prepare breakfast, let alone drink your tea while it's hot? (Looking at you, mamas everywhere.) This recipe might just be your saving grace. The oats offer fiber and protein, while the coconut milk provides a dose of healthy fats to keep your brain functioning and your blood sugar stable. Another potential benefit of oatmeal: A slew of anecdotal evidence suggests that consuming oats increases milk production for those who are breastfeeding. With this recipe, you can have your tea and eat it, too.

INGREDIENTS

- **1½** cups water
- **2** bags chai tea, caffeinated or decaffeinated
- **1½** cups rolled oats
- **1½** cups coconut milk, from a carton
- **1–2** tablespoons pure maple syrup (depending on your sweetness preference)

- **1** tablespoon chia seeds
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **½** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **¼** teaspoon ground nutmeg
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt
- Toppings (optional): raisins, shredded coconut, banana slices, and/or pecans

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring the water to a boil in a kettle or a small saucepan. Pour the boiling water into a heatproof container (like a mug or a Pyrex measuring cup), add the tea bags, and steep for 5 minutes. Remove the tea bags.
2. Meanwhile, mix the oats, coconut milk, maple syrup, chia seeds, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a medium mixing bowl until well combined. Stir in the tea. Pour the mixture into an airtight container and store overnight or for at least 8 hours in the refrigerator. Serve cold or warm, with raisins, shredded coconut, banana slices, or pecans, if desired.

BREAKFAST

Cinnamon Pear–Almond Butter Parfait with Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

Makes 1 serving
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes

This parfait is sweet from the pears and tangy from the yogurt. It's for when you're feeling fancy but still need time to clean up, get ready for the day, and have a mini dance party. Whether you opt for yogurt made from cow's milk or many of the plant-based options available, your gut will whisper a thank-you after breakfast. Yogurt is made with bacteria cultures, most commonly *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*, which offer benefits such as improved gut health and boosted immune function.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** teaspoons coconut oil
- **1** medium Bartlett pear, cored and diced
- **½** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **¼** teaspoon pure maple syrup

- **¼** teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **2** tablespoons raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- Pinch of kosher salt
- **⅓** cup plain yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **2** teaspoons almond butter

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the coconut oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. Once the oil is hot, add the pear, cinnamon, and maple syrup, and stir to combine. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the pear pieces have softened and smell delicious, 5 to 7 minutes.
2. While the pear cooks, warm the olive oil in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Add the pumpkin seeds, sprinkle with the salt, and toast, stirring often, until fragrant and lightly golden, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Scoop the yogurt into a bowl and top with the cinnamon pears and toasted pumpkin seeds. Drizzle with the almond butter and enjoy!

LUNCH/DINNER

Quinoa–Black Bean Beet Burger

Makes 8 burgers

Prep time: 15 minutes

Idle time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Packed with flavor and prebiotics, thanks to the quinoa, black beans, and onion, these burgers will have meat eaters and veg heads alike clamoring for more at your next gathering. A topping of naturally fermented sauerkraut provides an extra boost of flavor and nutrition.

INGREDIENTS

- **½** cup quinoa, rinsed well
- **1** cup vegetable broth
- **1** cup cooked black beans
- **1** cup shredded beets (about 1 medium beet)
- **⅓** cup shredded yellow onion
- **1** egg
- **1** cup almond flour
- **1** teaspoon garlic powder
- **½** teaspoon ground cumin

- **½** teaspoon paprika
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅛** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- **2** tablespoons avocado oil
- *For serving (optional):* buns or beds of lettuce, sauerkraut, lettuce, tomato, and/or onion

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring the quinoa and broth to a boil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and simmer until all the liquid is absorbed, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand, covered, for 10 minutes, then fluff with a fork.
2. Meanwhile, combine the beans, beets, onion, egg, flour, garlic powder, cumin, paprika, salt, and pepper in a large mixing bowl. Use your hands to mix well, smashing the beans along the way. Stir in the cooked quinoa.
3. Using a ⅓-cup measure, scoop out portions and shape into patties about 3 inches across and ½ inch thick. Place on a plate and refrigerate for 10 minutes.
4. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Carefully lay the burgers in the hot oil, leaving about 1 inch of space between them. Cook for 5 minutes, flip, then cook for 5 minutes longer. Serve on buns or beds of lettuce with sauerkraut and your other favorite burger toppings.

LUNCH/DINNER

Spring Mix Salad with Roasted Chickpeas and Miso Pesto

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

During this energized phase of the cycle, it's a great idea to reach for fresh, vibrant foods that help ramp up your energy as you head into the ovulation phase. We love a good salad, but we're big believers that it should be hearty, which means we don't skimp on the extra goodies and toppings to make it delicious and exciting. Asparagus is a wonderful source of bacteria-feeding prebiotics and anti-inflammatory phytochemicals, while miso boasts probiotics and phytoestrogens, which may potentially protect against breast cancer. Mi-so satisfied.

PESTO

- **3** cups packed basil
- **1/4** cup sunflower seeds
- **1/4** cup nutritional yeast
- **1** tablespoon lemon juice

- **1** teaspoon white miso
- **2** garlic cloves, crushed
- **½** cup extra-virgin olive oil
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

SALAD

- **1½** cups cooked chickpeas
- **1** teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon paprika
- **10–12** thick stalks asparagus, woody ends removed
- **6** cups spring mix greens
- **⅓** cup golden raisins
- **¼** cup crumbled goat cheese (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the pesto, place the basil, sunflower seeds, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, miso, and garlic in a food processor or high-powered blender. Pulse until chunky, using a spatula to scrape down the sides. With the machine running on low, slowly pour in the oil until a smooth pesto forms. Add the salt and some pepper, pulse, then taste. Add more salt, pepper, or lemon juice to taste.

2. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
3. To make the salad, toss together the chickpeas, oil, salt, and paprika in a medium mixing bowl until combined. Spread evenly on a large baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes, stirring halfway through. Let the chickpeas cool for a few minutes.
4. Meanwhile, using a peeler (Y-shaped works best), shave the asparagus into a large mixing bowl. Add the spring mix greens, raisins, and goat cheese (if using) to the bowl.
5. Scatter the chickpeas over the salad and toss the mixture with about ¼ cup of the pesto. Serve the remaining roughly ½ cup pesto on the side. Store leftovers in an airtight container for 2 to 3 days (the pesto will keep for up to 1 week if stored separately).

RITUAL

CHOOSE SHEETS AND PAJAMAS THAT BRING YOU JOY

The infamous “night sweats” can occur at any time of day, but at night in particular, they can leave you feeling powerless, tired, and uncomfortable in your own skin. It can help to invest in an extra set of sheets and pajamas that make you feel grounded, comfortable, and at home in your body. Set them near your bed, so if you’re awoken in the middle of the night by night sweats, you can easily swap out the sodden pj’s and sheets for fresh, clean ones.

Spritz your sheets with lavender spray for added comfort. Remember that, like the other phases you've experienced thus far, this too will pass (and you are resilient).

LUNCH/DINNER

Chicken Fajitas with Honey-Chipotle Yogurt Sauce

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

How do you make chicken fajitas better than they already are? Add honey-chipotle yogurt sauce. We decided to include raw honey in the sauce because, unlike honey that has been processed, raw honey has not been pasteurized or filtered. It gives a boost of vitamin B_6, which helps reduce inflammation and detoxify excess estrogen. With probiotic-rich yogurt and prebiotic-packed onions, these fajitas will make your gut growl for more.

SAUCE

- **½** cup plain yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **2** chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, plus **1** teaspoon of the sauce
- **2** teaspoons orange zest
- **2** teaspoons orange juice
- **1** tablespoon raw honey
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt

- **1/4** teaspoon garlic powder

FAJITAS

- **2** teaspoons avocado oil
- **1** pound boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-size pieces
- **1** medium yellow onion, sliced
- **1** large red bell pepper, sliced
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- *For serving (optional):* flour tortillas, plus quinoa or rice

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the sauce, combine the yogurt, chipotle peppers and adobo sauce, orange zest, orange juice, honey, salt, and garlic powder in a blender and mix until smooth. Set aside.
2. To make the fajitas, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Toss in the chicken and cook until browned and cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes. Add the onion and bell pepper, and sauté until they begin to soften, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Pour the sauce into the skillet, stir, and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat. Stir in the salt and some black pepper to taste. Serve immediately in tortillas, with quinoa or rice on the side, if desired. Store

leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Zucchini and Kimchi Frittata

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Kimchi is an acquired taste for some and love at first sight for others, but for those who love it, it is an especially helpful food during the follicular phase. Kimchi provides a two-for-one punch when it comes to nutrition: It is commonly made with prebiotic-rich vegetables including garlic, cabbage, and ginger. Gut support, check.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** teaspoon avocado oil
- **2** cups quartered and sliced zucchini (about 2 medium)
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **⅔** cup kimchi, chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- **12** eggs
- **½** cup almond milk
- **½** cup shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Heat the oil in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add the zucchini and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the garlic and kimchi, and cook for 1 minute longer. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Whisk together the eggs, almond milk, cheese, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a large mixing bowl until the egg mixture is uniform in color.
4. Pour the egg mixture into the skillet with the cooked vegetables and stir gently with a silicone spatula. Cook over medium heat for about 1 minute, then transfer the skillet to the middle rack of the oven.
5. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, or until the frittata has puffed up and the center jiggles ever so slightly. Do not overbake; although a golden top looks beautiful, it is a sign that the eggs have become spongy. Let the frittata cool on a wire rack before slicing and serving. Store any leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Garlic Tempeh Tacos with Pineapple-Jalapeño Salsa

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Tacos are good for the soul. These tacos are also good for the gut, as tempeh is a form of fermented soybeans and provides prebiotics, while pineapple contains an enzyme called bromelain that helps break down protein and reduces inflammation.

SALSA

- **1** cup finely diced pineapple (fresh or canned)
- **¼** cup finely diced red onion
- **¼** cup chopped fresh cilantro
- **1** medium jalapeño, seeded and minced
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

TACOS

- **2** tablespoons avocado oil
- **1** (8-ounce) package tempeh, finely diced

- **4** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** teaspoon ground cumin
- **1** teaspoon paprika
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **8** mini corn tortillas

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the salsa, combine the pineapple, onion, cilantro, jalapeño, and salt in a small bowl. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking.
2. To make the tacos, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the tempeh and garlic, and sauté for 2 minutes. Toss in the cumin, paprika, and salt. Sauté, stirring often, until the mixture is fragrant and the tempeh is lightly browned on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove from the heat.
3. Warm another large skillet over medium heat and add the tortillas. Warm for 1 to 2 minutes per side. Transfer the tortillas to two plates and evenly divide the garlic tempeh between them. Generously top each with the salsa and enjoy!

RITUAL

BUY FLOWERS

How joyful it is to wake up and see flowers smiling back at you or to wander out into your garden to find that a newly planted seed is starting to sprout. In homage to feeling the bloom of spring mentally and emotionally and as a way to honor yourself, invest in flowers and beautiful vases during this time.

During the Victorian era, flowers served as a secret language — a way to deliver messages that couldn't be spoken aloud. One popular book at the time was *Flower Lore* by Miss Carruthers of Inverness (published in Belfast in 1879). Certain flowers could be used to answer yes or no; flowers handed from a person's right hand meant "yes," while flowers handed from someone's left hand was a "no." Plants could also express specific feelings: A rose spoke of devotion while a pomegranate expressed deceit; rosemary was a sign of remembrance and peonies a nod at bashfulness.

Arranging flowers can be a creative, introspective way to express your budding emotions and preferences during the follicular phase. Pick up an old encyclopedia or research flowers and their symbolism. What are you feeling and how do you want to express that to the world? Meander to your farmers' market or grocery store, make a bouquet of blossoms in season, and speak the language of flowers. Then grow alongside them.

LUNCH/DINNER

Baked Salmon Cakes with Lemon-Dill Aioli

Makes 5 patties
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

Peanut butter and jelly, tea and toast, salmon and lemon — some combinations just make sense. Salmon is a rich source of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA. These healthy fats help reduce inflammation, promote heart and brain health, and are essential for fetal development during pregnancy. The addition of cornmeal, garlic, and onion in this recipe offers up prebiotics as well, and with a big boost of flavor thanks to the dill, this classic dish feels even fresher.

AIOLI

- **6** sprigs fresh dill
- **2** tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- **2** small garlic cloves, minced
- **2** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

SALMON CAKES

- **2** (6-ounce) cans salmon, liquid reserved
- **¼** cup diced yellow onion
- **3** tablespoons almond flour
- **3** tablespoons medium-grind cornmeal
- **1** egg
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- *For serving (optional):* greens or your favorite grain

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the aioli, combine the dill, lemon juice, garlic, oil, and salt in a food processor and mix until smooth, scraping down the sides as needed. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a medium baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
3. To make the salmon cakes, combine the salmon and its liquid, onion, flour, cornmeal, egg, garlic, parsley, and salt in a medium mixing bowl and mash with a fork. Using a ⅓-cup measure, scoop out portions and shape into patties. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet.
4. Bake the patties for 20 minutes, flipping halfway through.

5. To serve, place the salmon cakes over a bed of greens or your favorite grain and drizzle with the aioli. Refrigerate leftovers separately in airtight containers. The salmon cakes will keep for 2 to 3 days, while the aioli will be good for up to 1 week.

LUNCH/DINNER

Miso-Ginger Noodle Soup with Beef

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

This recipe is the flavor equivalent to a reverse mullet — vibrant ginger in the front with an all-business umami finish, thanks to the beef and mushrooms. Scallions, much like their more bulbous relatives, onions, provide prebiotics for our gut bacteria, along with vitamin C for an antioxidant boost and vitamin B_6 to support estrogen detoxification. Fresh ginger provides a warming zing and can help relieve intestinal upset such as gas, bloating, and nausea. Red miso packs a deep, rich flavor, but feel free to substitute with white or yellow miso for a milder soup. This is a great go-to for chillier mornings and evenings.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **6** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- **½** cup thinly sliced scallions

- **6** ounces fresh shiitake mushrooms, sliced and stems removed (or about 1 ounce dried mushrooms, rehydrated for 20 minutes)
- **3** tablespoons red miso
- **6** cups water
- **1** (8-ounce) package rice or glass noodles
- **½** pound flank steak, cut against the grain into ¼-inch-thick strips
- **⅔** cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- **1** tablespoon rice vinegar
- **1** teaspoon liquid aminos or coconut aminos

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Once the oil is hot, toss in the garlic and ginger, and sauté for about 1 minute, stirring often. Add the scallions, mushrooms, and miso, and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Pour the water into the pot and bring to a boil. Add the noodles and cook according to the package directions, then reduce the heat to medium. Stir in the steak, and cook until the meat is cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat.
3. Stir in the corn, vinegar, and liquid aminos. Taste, and add more vinegar or aminos if you like. Ladle into four bowls and serve immediately. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for 2 to 3 days.

RITUAL

PLAN YOUR TIME

Boundaries are the gateway to freedom. Without them, you may find yourself overwhelmed and taking on too much, or unfulfilled and yearning to fill yourself up. It takes time and mental focus to understand whether the routines you have in place are supporting you, and how you might implement more helpful ones. Thanks to the rise in estrogen, this is a good phase to initiate projects and plan big dreams. And thanks to the fact that our creative problem-solving abilities are in full gear, it's also a great time to accomplish the most mentally taxing actions.

Find your notebook or open your calendar and begin to look at the way you live your life. Are you content? Or do you wish you had more time to just be? During this phase, systems and boundaries beckon us , calling us to choose what works best for us and put those new routines into place. Make that appointment with your accountant and get ahead on taxes. Schedule time on your calendar to do dishes every morning. Dedicate an hour every day just to dream. What is it that you need to create more of *you* in your life, and what routines can you put in place to support a vibrant, thriving reality?

SNACK

Oatmeal–Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk Bites

Makes 18–20 balls

Prep time: 15 minutes

Idle time: 8 hours if you are sprouting the nuts

These no-bake bites are perfect for small children, adults on the go, or just about anyone anytime. Oats are a wonderful source of a type of fiber known as beta-glucan, which packs a mighty punch through its effects in lowering cholesterol, boosting the immune system, and regulating blood sugar. Want to give your gut some extra love? Use sprouted nuts, which are easier to digest and allow for better absorption of their abundance of nutrients (see the sprouting instructions).

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup unsalted raw walnuts
- ½ cup unsalted raw almonds
- ½ cup unsalted raw cashews
- ¼ cup rolled oats

- **6** Medjool dates, pitted
- **2** tablespoons peanut butter
- **1 ½** tablespoons coconut oil, melted
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **3** tablespoons water
- **⅓** cup dark chocolate chunks or chips (70% cacao or higher)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the walnuts, almonds, cashews, oats, dates, peanut butter, oil, vanilla, and salt in a food processor and mix until everything is broken down into small pieces. With the machine running on low, slowly drizzle in the water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until a slightly sticky dough begins to form. Add the chocolate and pulse until evenly combined.
2. Using a small spoon, scoop out pieces of dough and roll into balls about 1 ½ inches in diameter. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

SNACK

Sauerkraut

Makes about 5 cups

Prep time: 35 minutes

Idle time: 7 days

Here is a nutrient powerhouse that you can make at home. Sauerkraut has all the gut-supportive benefits of other fermented foods we've touched on, plus it contains another group of compounds, known as glucosinolates, that help metabolize estrogen. Sauerkraut works well at breakfast (hello, eggs), lunch (Quinoa–Black Bean Beet Burger with kraut, please), and dinner (pork chops and sauerkraut are BFFs). You'll need a widemouthed 32-ounce mason jar, a mallet or potato masher, and cheesecloth.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** large head green cabbage, julienned (about 8 cups), outer leaves and core reserved
- **2** tablespoons kosher salt
- **½** cup water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the cabbage in a large bowl. Add the salt and mix well. Using a mallet or a potato masher, pound the cabbage until it is soft and has begun to release moisture, 10 to 15 minutes.

2. Transfer the pounded cabbage to a widemouthed 32-ounce mason jar and pour in the water. Using the handle of a wooden spoon, completely submerge the cabbage. Place a reserved cabbage leaf on top and weight it down with the reserved core pieces, pushing these pieces under the brine as well. The cabbage must be submerged so that it is protected from molds (see Note).

3. Cover the jar with cheesecloth, secure with a rubber band, and let the cabbage ferment in a cool, dark place for 7 to 10 days. Check on your jar every other day to make sure the cut cabbage is fully submerged and to skim off any scum that forms on top.

4. After 7 days, taste the sauerkraut to see if it is tangy enough. Some people allow their sauerkraut to ferment for up to 1 month — it's all personal preference! When you enjoy the taste, replace the cheesecloth with a tight-fitting lid and transfer the jar to the refrigerator, where the sauerkraut will keep for up to 2 months.

Note: If fuzzy molds develop on your sauerkraut, discard the batch and start again.

SNACK

Chili and Lime Kale Chips

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Devon's husband's love of chips began when he was a child. "Hey, Dad, can I have chips? Dad, chips, please," was a refrain every other hour. Naturally, Devon wondered if her son would take after his father in more ways than just his smile and blue eyes. While Devon is all for a bag of good ol' potato chips, she wanted to offer something more nutritious and just as satisfying. Enter Chili and Lime Kale Chips, loved by the entire family. Kale boasts gut-healthy prebiotics and is a rich source of calcium, an essential mineral for bone health, especially as women age.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** bunch curly kale, washed and thoroughly dried
- **¼** cup extra-virgin olive oil
- **1** teaspoon lime juice
- **1** teaspoon chili powder
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** teaspoon lime zest
- **¼** teaspoon garlic powder

- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (160°C).
2. Rip the kale leaves into large pieces roughly 2 to 3 inches long (think chip shapes), discarding the stems. Toss the pieces into a large bowl.
3. Whisk together the oil, lime juice, chili powder, salt, lime zest, garlic powder, and pepper in a small mixing bowl until combined. Pour the mixture over the kale pieces and massage well with your hands to coat the pieces in oil and break down the fibers.
4. Spread the kale onto two large baking sheets, leaving a bit of space between the pieces.
5. Bake for 7 to 9 minutes, or until the chips feel crisp to the touch and begin to turn golden on the edges. These can burn easily, so keep a close eye on them! Allow to cool for a few minutes before digging in. These get soggy with time, so it's best to eat them within a couple of hours.

SNACK

Salt and Pepper Sprouted Almond Crackers

Makes about 30 crackers
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes

These satisfying little crackers are perfectly spiced and easy to make. Almonds offer hormone-supportive fats, vitamin E, calcium, iron, magnesium, and zinc, which are all made more bioavailable (that is, more readily absorbed) through the process of sprouting. Dip these babies in your favorite sauce, hummus, or dip.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 ½** cups sprouted almond flour
- **2** teaspoons kosher salt
- **½** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- **2** tablespoons coconut oil, melted

- **1** large egg

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Whisk together the flour, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl until combined. Whisk together the oil and egg in a small bowl. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just combined, scraping down the sides of the bowl.
3. Place the dough between two sheets of parchment paper and use a rolling pin to roll it out to a ⅛- to ¼-inch thickness. Transfer the dough to a large baking sheet and remove the top sheet of parchment paper. Use a knife or a pizza cutter to cut into 2-inch squares and separate slightly.
4. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until lightly golden and crisp. Let cool for 10 minutes on the baking sheet, then serve. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for 3 to 4 days.

DESSERT

Cranberry-Walnut Yogurt Cookies

Makes 24 cookies

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

These fluffy, subtly sweet cookies are the perfect hostess gift for your next soiree. Cranberries do a wonderful job of supporting our bodies during the follicular phase, as they provide both soluble and insoluble fiber to keep digestion moving, and they have the added bonus of encouraging urinary tract health. Walnuts are a rich source of polyunsaturated fatty acids, which support healthy brain function. If you don't have time to sprout the nuts, feel free to use raw walnuts.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 ¾** cups all-purpose gluten-free baking flour
- **½** teaspoon baking powder
- **½** teaspoon baking soda
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **1** egg
- **½** cup plain Greek yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **⅓** cup coconut sugar
- **⅓** cup pure maple syrup

- ¼ cup coconut oil, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅓ cup dried sweetened cranberries
- ⅓ cup chopped sprouted walnuts

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (190°C). Line two large baking sheets with silicone baking mats or parchment paper.
2. Whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large mixing bowl until combined. Whisk together the egg, yogurt, sugar, maple syrup, oil, and vanilla in a small mixing bowl until thoroughly combined.
3. Pour the egg mixture into the flour mixture and stir with a spatula until just combined, scraping down the sides to get every bit of flour from the bottom. Fold in the cranberries and walnuts.
4. Using a large cookie scoop (or a large spoon that gathers about 2 tablespoons), portion the dough onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving 1 to 2 inches between each cookie.
5. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes before serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for about a week.

DESSERT

Coconut-Ashwagandha Fudge

Makes 12 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Idle time: 1 hour

Known as a powerful adaptogen, ashwagandha helps our bodies better adapt to stress. Plus it supports memory function, which is ideal for this high-energy, mentally stimulating phase. With coconut, dates, cacao, and nut butter, this fudge is decadent and deeply satisfying. Sharing is encouraged, but optional.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** cup Medjool dates, pitted
- **¼** cup coconut butter, at room temperature
- **¼** cup nut butter (almond and cashew taste great)
- **¼** cup unsweetened cacao powder or cocoa powder
- **¼** cup shredded coconut
- **1** tablespoon cacao nibs
- **1** tablespoon ashwagandha powder
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **2** tablespoons coconut oil, melted
- **½** teaspoon vanilla extract

- **2** tablespoons water
- Flaky sea salt, for topping (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the dates, coconut butter, nut butter, cacao powder, shredded coconut, cacao nibs, ashwagandha, cinnamon, oil, and vanilla in a food processor and pulse until chunky, scraping down the sides with a spatula as needed. With the machine running on low, slowly drizzle in the water until a sticky (but not wet) dough forms.
2. Place a large piece of waxed paper on the counter and transfer the fudge mixture to the center. Cover with another piece of waxed paper and roll into a flat sheet about ¼ to ½ inch thick. Sprinkle lightly with salt, if using.
3. Transfer the fudge and waxed paper to a baking sheet and place in the freezer to set for 1 hour.
4. Using a sharp knife, cut the fudge into 12 squares and store in an airtight container. These melt easily, so they are best kept in the freezer, where they will keep for about 6 months.

DRINK

Honey-Cinnamon Latte

Makes 1 serving
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 5 minutes

There's something incredibly grounding and nourishing about the mixture of honey, cinnamon, and oat milk. It's like sun on your skin or the feeling of a warm blanket. This latte is all of that and more (and it is incredibly simple to make). In moments of scatter or frantic energy, reach for this latte. Both the cinnamon and the oat milk help stabilize blood sugar, which will help calm you.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** cup oat milk
- **½** cup water
- **1** teaspoon raw honey
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon

- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- Pinch of kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix the oat milk and water in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is hot and begins to foam, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Combine the honey, cinnamon, ginger, and salt in a blender. Carefully pour in the hot milk. Blend on high until smooth and frothy, about 1 minute. Pour into a mug and enjoy!

3

Nurture Sensual Abundance

THE OVULATION PHASE

Ovulation! It's the equivalent of a standing ovation (see what we did there?) when it comes to your cycle. From the moment you started to bleed, your body has been preparing for this event: the release of an egg. For many of us, this phase feels exciting and freeing, and we have ample amounts of energy. In traditional Chinese medicine, this phase mirrors the season of summer, and oftentimes, we find ourselves with a stronger libido and zest for life.

Ovulation generally occurs 14 to 21 days after menstruation, but it varies depending on outside factors like stress. The start of this phase is often marked by increased cervical fluid (read more about this) and lasts for only 3 to 5 days; this is known as the fertile window. If the egg is not fertilized by sperm (and for most cycles, this is the case), your body prepares to shed the uterine lining and you head into the luteal phase.

It’s important for all women who ovulate, not just those trying to get pregnant, to understand how to best take care of themselves during this phase. This is because ovulation plays a big role in overall hormonal health by leading to the production of progesterone, which we’ll explore in the next chapter.

Summer

Muddy feet, tangled hair, and howling underbellies
—
This is your summer heart.
Vivid, golden, and forever foraging
underneath soft and supple horizons.

OVULATION PHASE SNAPSHOT

Season

SUMMER

Season

FULL MOON

Archetypes

MOTHER, HEALER, NURTURER

THE BASICS

- The ovulation phase lasts for 3 to 5 days.
- The body releases more cervical fluid (discharge) in the days leading up to ovulation.
- The brief spike in LH and FSH sends a signal to the ovary that ovulation can occur. The follicle has reached maturity, and it literally bursts open to release the egg into the fallopian tube.
- Some women experience a slight pain or discomfort during ovulation known as mittelschmerz (“middle pain” in German).
- After the egg has been released, it will survive for between 12 and 24 hours. Your fertile window can begin up to 5 days beforehand, however, because that is how long sperm can survive in the female reproductive tract, waiting for the egg.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Hello, nurturer. Does your skin feel coated in gold? That's the sensation of summer sun as your body moves into the ovulation phase. You may have noticed that you feel sexier, more energized, and outgoing. Your glow is the result of a spike in testosterone as your body steps into its most fertile time of the month.

You are fertile in all ways — fertile body, fertile mind, fertile relationships, and fertile self-loving. This is the time when the verbal and social centers of the brain are stimulated, leading to adventures, wild hearts, and days that start and end with a sunrise. Sensuality is your guide this season. Time to wander.

HOW YOUR LIFESTYLE IS AFFECTED

The short phase of ovulation mirrors summer — you are your most energetic and vibrant self during this period, and you may find yourself less interested in eating and cooking. Instead, you may feel more inclined to focus on seeking adventure, having sex, or making memories. Embrace whatever your body and mind are urging you to do. The surges of summer are strong.

PAY ATTENTION TO

- ✶ Sexual desires. Create safe boundaries to feel and trust.
- ✶ Spontaneous urges to wander or explore. Say yes.
- ✶ Openness to making new friends or initiating conversation. Get the ball rolling on a new friendship or acquaintance.

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU OVULATE

In the first days of the ovulation phase, you will likely see an increase of cervical fluid (commonly referred to as discharge). This can range from white and creamy to clear and stretchy (very similar to egg white). Cervical fluid is the perfect environment for sperm to thrive because of its pH, and it allows them to travel more quickly.

If you practice the fertility awareness method (FAM) to track your cycles, you'll notice a spike in your basal body temperature after ovulation has occurred. This rise in temperature is caused by the production of progesterone, which we will discuss in the next chapter.

Some women also experience mild pain during ovulation. If you experience sharp and sudden dull cramps on one side of the abdomen, know that this is normal. As always, consult your doctor if you have excruciating pain or something doesn't feel right. You know your body best!

Feeling Frisky?

Thanks to a quick bump in testosterone, you may have noticed that you feel sexier, more energized, and outgoing around ovulation. There's a physiological reason for this. Our bodies experience a bump in testosterone to support ovulation and get us in the mood to have sex. This spike in testosterone can also cause pimples and breakouts.

FOODS FOR NOURISHMENT

During this phase, you may crave more gentle cooking methods and fresh fruits and veggies. This is because your body wants a healthy dose of fiber and vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that helps the body fight damaging particles such as free radicals. Fiber- and antioxidant-rich foods also support the body's production of another powerful antioxidant called glutathione, which aids the liver in detoxification. This ensures that your body can metabolize any excess estrogen, avoiding any buildup that can lead to PMS symptoms during the luteal phase.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Using more gentle cooking methods such as steaming or light sautéing.

- Eating fresh fruits and raw vegetables (think smoothies and big salads). Not only will they free you from prep time in the kitchen, but they can also leave you feeling vibrant and ready to engage with the world around you.
- Incorporating cruciferous vegetables and foods rich in glutathione into your daily rhythm.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables belong to the large brassica family. They include veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kale, mustard greens, and bok choy. The health benefits and nutrient profiles of this plant family are astounding, and these vegetables are linked with anticancer properties.

Eating lots of cruciferous vegetables during the ovulation phase is a wonderful way to support the liver's detoxification pathways. When these veggies begin to be metabolized, they release a compound called indole-3-carbinol, which may increase the rate at which estrogen is broken down by the liver by up to 50 percent. On top of that, this family of vegetables is a rich source of fiber, which keeps your digestion moving and grooving. If you're experiencing perimenopause, let cruciferous veggies be your best friend throughout the estrogen roller coaster and allow indole-3-carbinol to work its estrogen-detoxifying magic.

RECIPES FOR CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

- *Avocado Green Smoothie*

- *Matcha Mango-Peach Smoothie Bowl*
- *Kale, Black Bean, and Scrambled Egg Breakfast Burritos with Romesco Sauce*
- *Lemongrass-Coconut Chickpea Curry*
- *Veggie Hummus Collard Rolls with Spicy Peanut Sauce*
- *BBQ Cauliflower Bites*
- *Shredded Brussels Sprouts Slaw with Toasted Walnuts and Grapefruit Vinaigrette*

Glutathione

Glutathione is a protein with powerful antioxidant properties. It is utilized by every cell in our bodies to help eliminate toxins, support immune function, and protect against free radical damage. This is especially welcome during the ovulation phase, when it is particularly important that the liver properly detoxify.

Our bodies produce glutathione on their own, but many factors determine exactly *how much* we produce. Our levels drop as stress and exposure to harmful toxins pile up. Thankfully, we can consume a wide variety of foods to assist our body's natural production and replenishment of this pivotal compound. Here are the top foods to eat to boost glutathione production:

- **CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES.** The brassica family comes in yet again to offer nourishment thanks to their sulfur-

containing nutrients, which boost the body's ability to produce glutathione.

- **FOODS RICH IN VITAMIN C.** Vitamin C is a mighty antioxidant on its own and an essential nutrient in the production of glutathione. Reach for fresh fruits and vegetables, such as peppers, kale, collards, spinach, citrus, and berries, to boost vitamin C consumption.
- **FOODS HIGH IN SELENIUM.** Selenium is a trace element (meaning we need only very small amounts) that acts as an antioxidant and is necessary for the production of glutathione. Rich sources of selenium include Brazil nuts, tuna and other seafood, brown rice, pork, chicken, and beef.
- **WALNUTS, AVOCADOS, AND ASPARAGUS.** These foods are naturally rich in glutathione.

RECIPES TO INCREASE GLUTATHIONE

- *Orange Sunrise Smoothie*
- *Spinach-Tomato-Quinoa Breakfast Bites*
- *Citrus Breakfast Salad with Honey-Lime Yogurt and Mint*
- *Avocado Green Smoothie*
- *Matcha Mango-Peach Smoothie Bowl*
- *Kale, Black Bean, and Scrambled Egg Breakfast Burritos with Romesco Sauce*
- *Lemongrass-Coconut Chickpea Curry*
- *Southwest Chicken Salad with Avocado-Jalapeño Dressing*
- *Veggie Hummus Collard Rolls with Spicy Peanut Sauce*
- *Mediterranean Tuna Salad*

- *BBQ Cauliflower Bites*
- *Lemon-Garlic Asparagus*
- *Shredded Brussels Sprouts Slaw with Toasted Walnuts and Grapefruit Vinaigrette*
- *Strawberry-Coconut-Lime Ice Pops*
- *Maple-Tarragon Trail Mix with Brazil Nuts*
- *Broiled Cinnamon Peaches with Coconut Whipped Cream*
- *Banana Bites with Dark Chocolate, Toasted Coconut, and Hazelnuts*
- *Orange Ginger Fizz*
- *Cilantro-Cucumber Mocktail*

BREAKFAST

Orange Sunrise Smoothie

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

This smoothie is bursting with vitamin C, thanks to the oranges and strawberries, and the carrots boast impressive levels of provitamin A carotenes (the building blocks for vitamin A), which have been linked to reduced risk of many types of cancers, including bladder, breast, cervical, and colon cancer. This is summer — and nourishment — in a cup.

INGREDIENTS

- **3** navel oranges, peeled and halved
- **1** banana (preferably frozen)
- **1** medium carrot, shredded
- **½** cup frozen strawberries
- **½** tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- **⅓** cup coconut milk, from a carton (or more or less, depending on the desired thickness)
- Handful of ice cubes

Combine the oranges, banana, carrot, strawberries, ginger, coconut milk, and ice cubes in a blender and blend until

completely smooth. Pour into a glass and enjoy!

BREAKFAST

Spinach-Tomato-Quinoa Breakfast Bites

Makes 12 muffins

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Make a batch or two of these and grab a bite from the fridge when you need a quick but substantive breakfast. Quinoa offers many of the hormone-supportive nutrients we've covered, including magnesium, iron, and zinc, plus fiber to benefit the gut as well as lots of protein. Spinach provides an extra boost of magnesium and iron while promoting glutathione production to aid the liver and other detoxification pathways. These offer a whole lot of bang for your bite.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **½** cup quinoa, rinsed well
- **1** cup water
- **8** eggs
- **1** cup roughly chopped spinach
- **½** cup sliced cherry tomatoes

- **⅓** cup chopped yellow onion
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **1½** teaspoons kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- *For serving (optional):* salsa and/or avocado slices

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Brush a muffin pan with the oil.
2. Combine the quinoa and water in a small saucepan and place over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil, cover, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer until the water is absorbed, 12 to 15 minutes. Fluff with a fork and remove from the heat.
3. Whisk the eggs in a large mixing bowl until they are uniform in texture and color. Add the spinach, tomatoes, onion, garlic, salt, and pepper, and whisk to combine. Gently fold in the quinoa.
4. Carefully ladle the batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling each cup about three-quarters full. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the eggs are set. Let cool in the pan for a few minutes, then remove each muffin by running a sharp knife around the edge. Serve with your favorite salsa, avocado slices, or other breakfast sides, if desired. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days.

BREAKFAST

Citrus Breakfast Salad with Honey-Lime Yogurt and Mint

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Flaxseeds contain a group of nutrients called lignans, which are known phytoestrogens. During the ovulation phase, these estrogen-like compounds can protect our estrogen receptors from harmful endocrine disruptors. The citrus medley in this recipe also packs in vitamin C, and grapefruit is particularly high in lycopene, a nutrient that may protect against heart disease.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** small blood orange
- **1** grapefruit
- **1** navel orange
- **¼** cup plain yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **1** tablespoon raw honey
- **2** teaspoons ground flaxseed
- **1** teaspoon lime juice
- **2** tablespoons slivered almonds
- **1** tablespoon chopped fresh mint

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the ends off the blood orange so it has one flat surface at the top and one at the bottom. Stand it up on a cutting board and cut off the peel in small sections, working from the top to the bottom and following the curve of the fruit. Turn the orange on its side and cut into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place on a large plate. Repeat with the grapefruit and navel orange. Arrange the citrus so each slice overlaps a bit with the neighboring slices.
2. Whisk together the yogurt, honey, flaxseed, and lime juice in a small bowl. Drizzle half the dressing over the citrus.
3. Garnish the salad with the almonds and mint. Serve immediately with the remaining dressing on the side.

BREAKFAST

Avocado Green Smoothie

Makes 1 serving (2 ½ cups)

Prep time: 5 minutes

Green smoothies can get a bad rap in the taste department, but not this one. With hints of banana, apple, and cinnamon, it tastes delicious, and it offers good fat, fiber, vitamin K, vitamin E, indole-3-carbinol, and glutathione for liver detox support. The avocado adds a milkshake-like thickness, producing the most childlike of "milk" mustaches.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** cup packed kale, stems removed
- **½** medium avocado, sliced
- **½** medium apple (your favorite variety), cored and quartered
- **1** medium banana, frozen
- **½** cup ice cubes
- **1½** cups dairy-free milk
- **½** teaspoon ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the kale, avocado, apple, banana, ice, milk, and cinnamon in a high-powered blender and mix until smooth. Serve in a glass and enjoy!

Chew on This!

Chew your smoothie to send the signal to your gut that food is on its way. This activates stomach digestive enzymes, making it easier for your body to process all the smoothie's nutrients.

RITUAL

LISTEN TO YOUR IMPULSES

Change your hair — or your lipstick color. Rearrange your bedroom. Move to a new space. Whatever it is, shake up the current energy in your world. Oftentimes we find ourselves incredibly attached to our identity, which can be expressed by the clothes we wear, the people we surround ourselves with, and the food we eat. The ovulation phase asks you to question your identity and focus more on what feels best for you versus what makes you look best from the outside.

Because this is a time when your impulses are most energized, it's the perfect season to take stock of what

these impulses tell you. Where are you expressing yourself in healthy ways? And where are you bottling up urges and emotions that you want to explore but are afraid to because of self-limiting beliefs or societal standards you've made your own? This is the time to better connect with your true nature and commit to expressing your deepest dreams, desires, and truths. Say yes to the things that want to be seen.

BREAKFAST

Matcha Mango-Peach Smoothie Bowl

Makes 1 serving (2 cups)

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cauliflower in a smoothie?! Trust us, it works. In addition to making the smoothie fluffier, cauliflower adds vitamin K, boron, and indole-3-carbinol, which help flush out excess estrogen and harmful toxins. Matcha adds a sweet, earthy flavor plus a kick of energy thanks to the caffeine and a little nutrient called L-theanine, which delivers a focused boost without the jitters. L-theanine may also reduce stress and anxiety by increasing alpha brain waves, and it may stabilize blood pressure spikes caused by caffeine. If you like, top your bowl with our Dark Chocolate and Cherry Grain-Free Granola with Sprouted Walnuts for the cherry on top, granola-style.

INGREDIENTS

- **¾** cup oat milk
- **½** cup frozen cauliflower florets
- **⅓** cup frozen mango chunks
- **⅓** cup frozen peach slices
- **1** frozen banana

- **1½** teaspoons matcha powder
- **½** teaspoon vanilla extract
- Toppings (optional): Chia seeds, hemp seeds, banana slices, coconut flakes, and/or Dark Chocolate and Cherry Grain-Free Granola with Sprouted Walnuts

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the oat milk, cauliflower, mango, peaches, banana, matcha, and vanilla in a high-powered blender and blend until smooth. Place in a bowl, top with your choice of toppings, and dig in!

BREAKFAST

Kale, Black Bean, and Scrambled Egg Breakfast Burritos with Romesco Sauce

Makes 4 wraps

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

We love breakfast burritos. Complete with kale (and its estrogen-detoxifying indole-3-carbinol), black beans, scrambled eggs, and fresh romesco sauce, this is a special stay-at-home kind of brunch for any season.

SAUCE

- **1** medium red bell pepper
- **⅓** cup canned fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- **1** garlic clove, smashed
- **¼** cup unsalted raw hazelnuts
- **¼** cup roughly chopped fresh parsley
- **1** teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- **1** teaspoon paprika
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

- 1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper

BURRITOS

- **2** tablespoons unsalted butter
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **3** cups chopped kale, stems removed
- **1 1/4** cups cooked black beans
- **1/2** teaspoon kosher salt
- **4** eggs
- **1/8** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- **4** (8-inch) tortillas, flour or gluten-free

Our Take on Romesco Sauce

Romesco sauce is a deeply flavorful sauce originating from Tarragona, Spain. It is traditionally made with tomatoes, peppers, garlic, nuts, and olive oil. We opted for hazelnuts because of their buttery flavor and high levels of magnesium, iron, and vitamin E. Romesco sauce also tastes great over grilled fish, poultry, or vegetables or as a garnish for quiches and frittatas.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the sauce, roast the bell pepper over a medium-high flame on the stovetop (or under the broiler), turning every few minutes, until the skin has blackened. Wrap in aluminum foil and let cool for about 5 minutes. Peel away and discard the burnt skin, stem, and seeds.

2. Combine the roasted bell pepper, tomatoes, garlic, hazelnuts, parsley, vinegar, paprika, salt, and cayenne in a food processor and pulse until mostly smooth. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking. Set aside.

3. To make the burritos, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds. Stir in the kale and sauté until it begins to wilt, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the beans and ¼ teaspoon of the salt, and reduce the heat to low to keep warm.

4. Melt the remaining 1 tablespoon butter in a medium skillet over medium-low heat. Whisk together the eggs, the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and the black pepper in a mixing bowl. Pour the eggs into the heated skillet and cook until the edges begin to set, 2 to 3 minutes, then gently fold the eggs over using a silicone spatula. Cook, turning the eggs occasionally with the spatula, until the eggs look just slightly undercooked, 6 to 8 minutes longer.

5. Warm the tortillas in a dry, hot pan or under the broiler for 2 to 3 minutes. Divide the warm tortillas among four plates and add the bean and kale mixture, scrambled eggs, and about ¼ cup of romesco sauce to the center of each tortilla. Fold into small burritos and serve immediately. Store leftovers in separate containers in the refrigerator

for 2 to 3 days, or freeze premade burritos for up to 2 months.

LUNCH/DINNER

Lemongrass-Coconut Chickpea Curry

Makes 6–8 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Curry is surprisingly easy to make and understatedly delicious. This version consists of a coconut milk base paired with fresh ginger (which stimulates digestion and acts as a carminative, reducing gas and intestinal discomfort), lemongrass, and grounding chickpeas. Look for fresh lemongrass in the produce section of your grocery store or Asian market. This twist on a classic feeds your whole being and will have your family clamoring for more.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon coconut oil
- **½** medium yellow onion, diced
- **1** tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- **3** stalks lemongrass, bottom third only, thick outer layer removed
- **2** tablespoons curry powder
- **1** teaspoon paprika

- **½** teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** medium crown broccoli, cut into florets
- **1** medium sweet potato, peeled and diced
- **2** small carrots, diced (about 1 cup)
- **1** small red bell pepper, diced
- **2** cups vegetable broth or water
- **1** (13.5-ounce) can full-fat coconut milk
- **1½** cups cooked chickpeas
- **2** teaspoons kosher salt
- **¼** cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro
- **1** tablespoon lime juice
- *For serving (optional):* jasmine rice, basmati rice, or naan

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté until fragrant and translucent, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the ginger, lemongrass, curry powder, paprika, and cayenne, and sauté for 2 minutes, stirring often. Add the garlic and sauté for another 30 seconds.

2. Add the broccoli, sweet potato, carrots, bell pepper, broth, coconut milk, chickpeas, and salt to the pot, stir well, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover,

and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the lid and simmer for 10 minutes longer, uncovered, to reduce the liquid.

3. Add the cilantro and lime juice, stir, and taste. Adjust the seasoning to your liking and serve immediately over jasmine or basmati rice or with delicious naan. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

RITUAL

GIVE BACK

Feeling full is a privilege and a gift. It also takes work to protect your boundaries and feed your soul with things that make you feel like "you." During ovulation, your clarity and wild nature may have you feeling abundant (and your boundaries are snugly in place), making it the perfect time to give back to others who may be wandering through winter storms. Giving back can be, and most often is, most effective when it comes from a place of sincerity and simplicity. Something as simple as a call, a visit, a text, or a card with something little that reminds you of the receiver can make all the difference.

Ovulation can also be a time to give back to the world at large. Volunteering at an event for a nonprofit organization or supporting a small business is a sure way to connect with and inspire people you come into contact with while also supporting the collective. There is no right or wrong

way of giving back, as long as it's done from a place of fullness versus a place of lack. Check in with yourself before you give; if the impulse comes from a place of overwhelming gratitude, act on it.

LUNCH/DINNER

Southwest Chicken Salad with Avocado-Jalapeño Dressing

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Add some zest to your lunch salad routine with this flavorful and spicy recipe. Tomatoes, lime, and avocado offer a boost of vitamin C, and chicken is a good source of selenium — two nutrients that increase the production of detoxifying glutathione.

DRESSING

- **¼** medium avocado, sliced
- **1** small jalapeño, destemmed, and seeds removed if desired
- **2** tablespoons fresh cilantro
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon garlic powder
- Freshly ground black pepper
- **⅓** cup water
- **¼** cup plain yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **1** tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **2** teaspoons lime juice

SALAD

- **1** pound boneless chicken thighs
- **4** teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- **1** cup cooked black beans
- **1** cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- **¼** cup thinly sliced scallions
- **¼** cup diced fresh tomatoes
- **1** tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
- **1** tablespoon lime juice
- **½** teaspoon garlic powder
- **½** teaspoon paprika
- **½** teaspoon ground cumin
- **8** cups roughly chopped romaine lettuce
- **⅔** cup tortilla chips or strips

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the dressing, combine the avocado, jalapeño, cilantro, salt, garlic powder, and pepper to taste in a food processor or high-powered blender. Add the water, yogurt, oil, and lime juice, and mix on high until smooth. If you would like a thinner consistency, add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).

3. To make the salad, place the chicken thighs in a medium shallow baking dish and coat with 2 teaspoons of the oil and a generous sprinkle of salt and pepper.

4. Bake the chicken for 20 to 22 minutes, or until it is no longer pink in the center and the internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C). Let cool for 5 minutes, then shred the chicken using two forks.

5. Meanwhile, mix together the black beans, corn (thawed if previously frozen), scallions, tomatoes, cilantro, lime juice, garlic powder, paprika, and cumin with ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, and the remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a medium mixing bowl. Taste and add more seasonings as desired.

6. Combine the lettuce, bean mixture, shredded chicken, and tortilla chips in a large mixing bowl and toss well. Add dressing to your liking or serve on the side. Store leftovers in separate containers in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Veggie Hummus Collard Rolls with Spicy Peanut Sauce

These rolls are a staple favorite, and they're fun to make to boot. Collard greens and purple cabbage bring the indole-3-carbinol, while the bell pepper and carrot deliver the vitamin C to promote our bodies' natural glutathione production — it's a powerful combination to support the liver. Not a peanut fan? Use almond butter instead, or opt for our Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce. Have kids? Set up the fillings assembly-line-style and ask the youngsters to help out by filling the rolls (and, of course, eating them).

ROLLS

- **5** cups water
- **10** collard green leaves, tough stems removed
- **1** cup hummus (your favorite flavor)
- **1** large avocado, thinly sliced

- **1** large carrot, thinly sliced
- **1** medium bell pepper, thinly sliced
- **¾** cup chopped purple cabbage
- **½** cup bean sprouts
- **¼** cup chopped fresh cilantro

SAUCE

- **¼** cup creamy peanut butter
- **3** tablespoons liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **2** tablespoons sesame oil
- **1** tablespoon chili garlic sauce
- **1** teaspoon pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon rice vinegar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the rolls, bring the water to a boil in a large saucepan and prepare an ice bath in a large bowl. Place a clean towel on the counter or over a plate. Submerge 2 or 3 collard green leaves into the boiling water for 20 to 30 seconds, remove with tongs, and dunk in the ice bath for about 10 seconds. Lay out flat on the towel and pat dry. Repeat with the remaining collard leaves.
2. Set a collard leaf on a plate. Along the center stem line, place 1 to 2 tablespoons of hummus, a couple of avocado

slices, a few carrot slices, a few bell pepper slices, about 1 tablespoon of cabbage, about 1 tablespoon of bean sprouts, and about 1 teaspoon of cilantro. Carefully roll the bottom of the wrap over the filling, then tuck the sides over and continue to roll until it is sealed. Repeat with the remaining collard greens, adjusting the filling amounts as desired.

3. To make the peanut sauce, whisk together the peanut butter, liquid aminos, oil, chili garlic sauce, maple syrup, and vinegar in a small mixing bowl until combined. Taste and adjust the spices to your liking. If you would like a thinner sauce, add warm water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until you get the perfect consistency. Serve the peanut sauce

immediately with the rolls for dipping, or store the wraps and sauce separately in sealed containers in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

RITUAL

ENGAGE IN BOLD CONVERSATIONS AND SET BOUNDARIES

During the ovulation phase, you feel the sun on your back. The warmth reminds you that being safe, although

comforting, isn't the end goal. You know that when you stand with integrity, you get closer to who you are and where you want to be. Because the verbal and social centers of the brain are stimulated during this phase, it's the season to express yourself and stand for what you want—even when it is uncomfortable. Whether you want to ask your boss for a raise, tell someone you love them, or book tickets to a place you've always wanted to visit, now is the time to take the first confident step toward bringing your desire into reality.

As you continue to befriend your power and gain clarity around who you are, the notion and need for boundaries also arise. Where are you blurring your edges in life projects, work, and relationships? How is this affecting you? What relationships feel tiring and weighty, and how can you set boundaries to honor your life force and your preferences? Where do you need to dream a little more? Creating boundaries can feel hard, but it is necessary for your self-worth and compassion toward others to flourish. Boundaries protect what you value in life and allow you to prioritize what matters to you so that you can show up as a more vibrant, fuller self to feed your own soul and others.

LUNCH/DINNER

Mediterranean Tuna Salad

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Tuna fish is a great source of selenium, which bumps up glutathione production, and it also boasts hormone-supportive fatty acids EPA and DHA. Mixed with juicy red grapes for a burst of sweetness, and avocado and pine nuts for energy-sustaining fat, fiber, and protein, this quick salad packs a wallop of flavor and nutrition.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** (5-ounce) cans tuna, liquid reserved
- **½** cup finely diced cucumber (about ½ of a small cucumber)
- **⅓** cup red grapes, quartered
- **¼** cup pine nuts
- **1** tablespoon lemon juice
- **½** teaspoon lemon zest
- **1** medium avocado, diced
- **3** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **½** teaspoon garlic powder
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- *For serving (optional):* bread, greens, or crackers and veggies

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the tuna (and its liquid), cucumber, grapes, pine nuts, lemon juice, and lemon zest in a small mixing bowl. Stir well.
2. Place the avocado, oil, garlic powder, salt, onion powder, and pepper in another small bowl. Using a fork, mix while mashing the avocado.
3. Add the avocado mixture to the tuna and stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking. Serve immediately in a sandwich, atop a bed of greens, or as a dip for crackers and veggies. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

SIDE DISH

BBQ Cauliflower Bites

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Something about barbecue has us yearning to gather around the picnic table with our closest friends and family. These cauliflower bites provide that same effect while offering loads of nutrients, including prebiotic fiber to feed the gut microbiome, vitamin C to improve glutathione production, and boron to reduce inflammation.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** medium head cauliflower, cut into florets
- **3** teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **¼** cup ketchup
- **1** tablespoon molasses
- **1** tablespoon Dijon mustard
- **1** tablespoon ground flaxseed
- **1** tablespoon finely ground cornmeal
- **2** teaspoons brown sugar
- **1½** teaspoons apple cider vinegar

- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Toss the cauliflower florets with 1 teaspoon of the oil on a large baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes, flipping the pieces halfway through.
3. Meanwhile, mix the remaining 2 teaspoons oil with the ketchup, molasses, mustard, flaxseed, cornmeal, sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire, salt, and garlic powder in a small mixing bowl until smooth.
4. Pour the sauce over the baked cauliflower florets and toss well to coat. Return the cauliflower to the oven and bake for 10 to 15 minutes longer, or until the cauliflower bites are crisp on the outside and easily pierced with a fork. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days, but note that they will lose their crispness.

SIDE DISH

Lemon-Garlic Asparagus

Makes 3 servings
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes

During ovulation, we may find ourselves reaching for simplicity, much like we ditch our shoes and pants during the summer in exchange for bare feet and flowing dresses. This simple dish uses minimal ingredients, letting nature (and the profound flavors of lemon and garlic) speak for itself. Asparagus is a nutrient powerhouse, as it boasts high levels of glutathione and vitamins C, A, and B_6 and may promote joint health through its anti-inflammatory properties.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **2** teaspoons red pepper flakes (optional)
- **1** teaspoon lemon juice
- **4** garlic cloves, minced

- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- **¼** teaspoon lemon zest
- **1** bunch asparagus (1–1 ½ pounds), woody ends broken off

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Whisk together the oil, pepper flakes (if using), lemon juice, garlic, salt, black pepper, and lemon zest in a small bowl.
3. Place the asparagus spears in a large bowl. Pour the oil mixture over the asparagus and toss to coat. Spread the asparagus on a large baking sheet in an even layer with a bit of space between spears.
4. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the spears are easily pierced with a fork and slightly golden. Serve immediately. Store leftovers in an airtight container and consume within a day or two, as they will become soggy with time.

SIDE DISH

Shredded Brussels Sprouts Slaw with Toasted Walnuts and Grapefruit Vinaigrette

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 25 minutes

Idle time: 30 minutes

Instead of bringing the traditional mayo-laden coleslaw to your next gathering, whip up this healthy alternative in under a half hour. The shredded Brussels sprouts, apple, and carrots offer a grounding base, while the grapefruit vinaigrette gives it a fresh and bright finish. The slaw is packed with indole-3-carbinol from the Brussels sprouts and glutathione's pal vitamin C thanks to the grapefruit, and your liver will be forever grateful. Serve the slaw as a crunchy side, on top of a juicy burger, or as a garnish for a summertime bowl.

VINAIGRETTE

- **2** tablespoons grapefruit juice
- **2** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **1** tablespoon pure maple syrup
- **1½** teaspoons white wine vinegar

- **1 ½** teaspoons Dijon mustard
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅛** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

SLAW

- **3** cups shredded Brussels sprouts
- **½** cup shredded Fuji or Gala apple (about ½ of a medium apple)
- **½** cup shredded carrots (about 1 ½ medium carrots)
- **2** tablespoons finely diced shallots
- **½** cup chopped unsalted raw walnuts
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the vinaigrette, whisk together the grapefruit juice, oil, maple syrup, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking.
2. To make the slaw, combine the Brussels sprouts, apple, carrots, and shallots in a large bowl and toss well.
3. Place a small skillet over medium heat and add the chopped walnuts. Toast the nuts for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the toasted nuts, salt, and pepper to the bowl with the slaw and mix well.

4. Pour the dressing over the slaw. Toss well and place the slaw in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to meld. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

RITUAL

SHARE YOUR PREGNANCY INTENTIONS

What does creating a soul mean to you and your partner? What parts of yourselves are coming together to fully commit in the biggest collaboration of your lives? It may feel daunting, overwhelming, scary, and life changing, while simultaneously feeling like the easiest decision the two of you have ever made. Embrace the dichotomy.

Wherever you're at — individually and as a couple — it's time to bare it all, to see yourself and your partner in a way you never have before and dream deeper than you're used to. It's time to accept and talk about what is out of your control, and also what is in your control and what kind of environment you want to create as this seed is planted and as it grows. Now is the time to talk about ways in which you can create a foundation that is ripe with love, intentionality, intimacy, and vulnerability. Let the baby making begin.

SNACK

Strawberry-Coconut-Lime Ice Pops

Makes about 5 ice pops

Prep time: 10 minutes

Idle time: 4 hours

Here's a treat that hearkens back to childhood. Made with a coconut milk base, these ice pops contain medium-chain triglycerides (a type of fatty acid), which are readily absorbed and easily digested and may promote a healthy gut microbiome by feeding beneficial bacteria. Strawberries and fresh lime give a pop of flavor and vitamin C. These treats pair perfectly with hopscotch and late-summer nights.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** (13.5-ounce) can full-fat coconut milk
- **3** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **1** tablespoon lime juice
- Zest of **1** medium lime

- **3** large strawberries, thinly sliced

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk together the coconut milk, maple syrup, lime juice, and lime zest in a medium mixing bowl until smooth.
2. Place 3 or 4 strawberry slices in each ice-pop mold, then pour the coconut-lime mixture into the molds. Secure the ice-pop holders or sticks, then transfer the molds to the freezer and let freeze until set, about 4 hours.
3. To serve, place the molds in a bowl of warm water for 20 to 30 seconds, or until the pops are easy to pull out.

SNACK

Maple-Tarragon Trail Mix with Brazil Nuts

Makes 4 cups

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

This mix is full of Brazil nuts, which are high in selenium and vitamin E — two nutrients that work together to promote glutathione production and prevent cell damage due to harmful free radicals. Bring a batch to your next potluck or holiday gathering and watch all the new friends you make.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** cup roughly chopped unsalted raw Brazil nuts
- **1** cup unsalted raw cashews
- **⅓** cup unsalted raw sunflower seeds
- **⅓** cup sesame seeds
- **2** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** cup sweetened dried cranberries
- **2** teaspoons dried tarragon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a medium baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. Combine the Brazil nuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, oil, maple syrup, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Mix well and spread in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 8 minutes.
3. Add the cranberries and tarragon to the baking sheet and stir well. Bake for 2 minutes longer, then cool for 10 minutes before serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 6 months.

DESSERT

Popped Amaranth–Tahini Chocolate Bars

Makes about 20 squares

Prep time: 25 minutes

Idle time: 45 minutes

These are like candy bars with a subtly nutty taste and a whole lot of nourishment. Amaranth may be tiny, but it is packed with protein, fiber, iron, B-complex vitamins, and magnesium. Tahini (sesame seed butter) offers a delicious flavor and boasts magnesium, zinc, and calcium.

INGREDIENTS

- **1–2** tablespoons uncooked amaranth
- **2** (4-ounce) bars dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher)
- **1** tablespoon tahini
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- Flaky sea salt, for topping

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. Warm a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. To test the heat of the pan, add a few grains of amaranth and cover with a lid. Continue to heat the pan, shaking it frequently, until the grains turn a dark brown. Discard the grains.
3. Add about 1 teaspoon of the amaranth to the hot pan and shake constantly until the majority of the amaranth has popped, 10 to 15 seconds. Quickly transfer the popped amaranth to a bowl and return the saucepan to the heat. Repeat until you have ¼ cup of popped amaranth.
4. Break the chocolate into small pieces and place in a microwavable bowl. Melt the chocolate in the microwave at high power for about 1 minute, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until smooth and shiny.
5. Stir the popped amaranth, tahini, and vanilla into the melted chocolate. Spread the mixture in an even layer (about ¼ inch thick) on the prepared baking sheet, and sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Chill in the refrigerator for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until the chocolate has set.
6. Cut the hardened chocolate into 2-inch squares. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

DESSERT

Broiled Cinnamon Peaches with Coconut Whipped Cream

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

This dish is as sweet, delicious, and luscious as it sounds. Peaches are front and center with a dose of vitamin C, fiber, potassium, and heart-protective lycopene. Topped with coconut whipped cream, this 20-minute dessert is an easy sweet fix. You'll just need to plan ahead, as the coconut milk must chill overnight in the refrigerator.

WHIPPED CREAM

- **1** (13.5-ounce) can coconut cream, chilled overnight or at least 8 hours
- **¾** teaspoon pure maple syrup
- **½** teaspoon vanilla extract

PEACHES

- **3** ripe peaches, halved and pitted
- **2** teaspoons coconut oil, melted
- **1** tablespoon brown sugar
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the whipped cream, carefully scoop the chilled coconut cream out of the can into a small mixing bowl. Try to get only the thick cream, and save the liquid (coconut milk) for another recipe. Add the maple syrup and vanilla to the bowl. Using a handheld or stand mixer, whip the ingredients until the cream becomes light and fluffy and slight peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to use.
2. To prepare the peaches, set the top oven rack about 6 inches below the broiler and preheat the broiler to high.
3. Place the peaches on a baking sheet, cut-side down. Broil for 3 minutes, remove from the oven, and flip the peaches over.
4. Whisk together the oil, sugar, and cinnamon in a small bowl. Generously brush the flesh side of each peach with the mixture, then broil for 5 minutes longer, or until golden and soft. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes.

5. Top each peach half with a dollop of coconut whipped cream and serve immediately. Store leftovers in separate, airtight containers in the refrigerator. The coconut whipped cream will keep for up to 1 week and the peaches for 1 or 2 days.

DESSERT

Banana Bites with Dark Chocolate, Toasted Coconut, and Hazelnuts

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

You're 10 minutes from heaven. The vitamin C and magnesium of the bananas are particularly supportive in the ovulation phase. The dark chocolate (another good source of magnesium) and cinnamon (which helps regulate blood sugar) make this healthy and delicious dessert one to remember.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** tablespoons unsweetened coconut flakes
- **2** large bananas
- **¼** cup dark chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- **¼** cup unsalted raw hazelnuts, chopped

- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Flaky sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat a small skillet over medium heat and add the coconut flakes. Stir often until the flakes begin to brown, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.
2. Using a sharp knife, slice the bananas into ¼-inch rounds and transfer to a large plate.
3. Place the chocolate chips in a small microwavable bowl. Melt the chocolate in the microwave at high power for about 1 minute, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until smooth and shiny. Using a spoon or spatula, drizzle the chocolate over the bananas. Sprinkle the toasted coconut flakes, chopped hazelnuts, cinnamon, and a pinch of salt on top. Serve immediately.

DRINK

Orange Ginger Fizz

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

This refreshing drink has the right amount of warming ginger and sweet orange, plus it offers a punch of vitamin C and may help settle an upset stomach by reducing gas and intestinal discomfort (praise you, ginger). It is perfect as a nightcap, fancy mocktail, or our take on a vitamin C fizzy tablet for when you're feeling run down.

SYRUP

- **½** cup water
- **½** cup coconut sugar
- **2** tablespoons roughly chopped fresh ginger

FIZZ

- **1** large navel orange
- Ice cubes
- **1** (12-ounce) can sparkling water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the syrup, combine the water, sugar, and ginger in a small saucepan over low heat. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar dissolves, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool for 5 minutes. Strain and discard the ginger.
2. To make the fizz, juice the orange into a small bowl. Run the juice through a fine-mesh strainer to remove the pulp, if desired.
3. Place a few ice cubes in each of two tumbler glasses. Divide the sparkling water and fresh orange juice between the glasses and top each with 1 tablespoon of the syrup. Stir well and enjoy. Store leftover syrup in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks for future drinks or to pour over pancakes or yogurt bowls.

RITUAL

TAKE A TRIP

Perhaps the healer in you is looking for a space to lay low while feeling high — a place where like-minded individuals gather, howl at the moon, and share beer. Or maybe it's a quiet space with lots of light, green grass to get lost in, and one or two intimate friends to share late nights and early mornings with. Whether solo or with friends, now is the time to get out of your day-to-day scenery and fill up on all kinds of socialization that brings you total joy. Trust in the

unknown and embrace the very potent truth that life itself is a trip.

RITUAL

PLAN A DATE NIGHT

The date scenarios you dreamt up during the follicular phase have been sleepily waiting on tiny pieces of paper (see here). You and your partner, or maybe just you, are eager for a night of sensuality and sexuality. Now is the time to play, search, explore — release, relax, rejoin —

and growl, laugh, and run. Whether you choose one date-night idea out of a hat or several, set the intention to show up fully. The summer heat beckons you and will soon be replaced with warm textures and cool tones. Be there with bright eyes, soft hands, and curiosity on your tongue.

DRINK

Cilantro-Cucumber Mocktail

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

It wouldn't be summer without a cucumber-centric drink. Aside from their well-known refreshing and hydrating qualities (they are mostly water), cucumbers offer vitamins C and A to help promote glutathione production and radiant skin. With their hint of cilantro, these mocktails are perfect to sip poolside.

INGREDIENTS

- **½** cup chopped cucumber (skin on)
- **¼** cup packed fresh cilantro
- Zest and juice of **1** navel orange
- Zest and juice of **1** lime
- **1–2** tablespoons honey (optional)

- **2** cups ice
- **1** (12-ounce) can sparkling water

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the cucumber, cilantro, orange zest and juice, lime zest and juice, and honey, if using, in a high-powered blender and mix until smooth. Add the ice and sparkling water and blend again until mostly smooth. Serve in two tumbler glasses and enjoy!

4

Honor Your Inner Landscape

THE LUTEAL PHASE

The luteal phase is a long, transitional phase that begins on the day after ovulation and ends on the first day of your period. On average, it is 14 days long, making it the longest phase of the menstrual cycle. Traditional Chinese medicine correlates the luteal phase with autumn, and we often find ourselves shedding what no longer feels relevant, supportive, or true as we prepare for winter, or menstruation. Whereas summer had us feeling energetic and maybe even a bit frenetic, autumn has us beginning to slow down and channel that energy into nurturing our deepest relationships, completing projects, and tidying up loose ends, both mentally and physically.

This phase starts when the progesterone (which means “for gestation or pregnancy”) levels in your blood begin to ramp up immediately after ovulation, with the biological goal of preparing your body for a potential pregnancy. The increase in progesterone (also called the mother hormone) can heighten your feel-good emotions and your desire to nest. If pregnancy doesn’t occur, progesterone levels begin to decline, eventually leveling out, causing the uterine lining to shed (the onset of the menstrual phase).

The dip in progesterone can often result in feelings of dissatisfaction or restlessness. Pair that with the fact that the second half of the luteal phase is when we see the greatest number of PMS symptoms, such as breakouts, cramping, and bloating, and it's clear that it is essential to lean into your desires and needs and truly take care of yourself.

Fall

That siren call comes again
and you softly shiver —
letting go isn't always easy.
But as you pass the crimson red
and golden ocher,
the leaves talk to you
and they tell you that falling
away from
is what brings you closer
to.

LUTEAL PHASE SNAPSHOT

Season

FALL

Season

CRESCENT MOON

Archetypes

WILD WOMAN, PRIESTESS, ENCHANTRESS

THE BASICS

- This phase begins after ovulation, or around day 15 or 16 in a 28-day cycle.
- After the mature follicle has released the egg, it transforms into a tiny, hormone-producing structure called the corpus luteum. The role of the corpus luteum is to secrete the hormone progesterone.
- Progesterone immediately begins to rise after ovulation, with the goal of preparing the body for a potential pregnancy. It causes body temperature to rise and continues to nourish and grow the uterine lining.
- If the egg is not fertilized, the corpus luteum survives only for 12 to 16 days. Progesterone levels reach their peak around day 20 to 22 of a 28-day cycle and begin to decline as the corpus luteum shrivels and is eventually reabsorbed.

- If the egg is fertilized, the corpus luteum will remain intact and continue producing progesterone for most of the first trimester, until the placenta takes over and provides oxygen and nutrients to the growing fetus.
- Estrogen surges around day 20 to 22 of a 28-day cycle, increasing the chances of implantation of a fertilized egg and contributing to emotional fluctuations.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Summer sunsets slowly bleed into night skies as your body prepares to shed its uterine layers and bleed. Your inner life feels vibrant and alive during this phase, giving root to personal discoveries and an acute sense of what no longer feels at home inside of you.

Discomfort becomes your ally and the wild woman your guide as you slowly shift into deep autumn. As progesterone and estrogen begin to decline during the second half of the luteal phase, your mental, physical, and spiritual energy will follow suit, asking you to trade in bare feet for bare bones.

HOW YOUR LIFESTYLE IS AFFECTED

In the beginning of this phase, you may still long to connect and have adventures as those lingering summer days of the ovulation phase beckon. Lean into these desires. But

as you welcome fall into your body toward the second half of this phase, begin clearing your social calendar, practice saying no, and turn inward. Ramp up your self-care and embrace whatever it is you long for. Everyone practices self-care differently — release judgment and make space for what feels nourishing to you.

PAY ATTENTION TO

- Your slow journey inward and the desire to feel grounded. This is the ultimate phase to care for yourself and prepare for the menstrual phase.
- Your desire for more sleep. You may wish to nod off earlier or stay in bed a bit longer. Choose presence.
- Your impulse to nest or prepare for winter. Turn to warming foods and warming waters.
- Your need to cuddle. You may wish to trade sex for cuddles — or wish to incorporate more of both.

AND THEN THERE IS THE INFAMOUS PMS

We recognize it by irritability, breakouts, cramps, headaches, breast tenderness, and a whole host of other symptoms. Sadly, because PMS (premenstrual syndrome) is experienced by the

majority of people with periods, we have normalized it. But while it is common, it is not biologically normal. PMS doesn't have to rule your life, and you do not have to be miserable in the week leading up to your period.

While the exact cause of PMS is unknown and varies from person to person, living in harmony (mind, body, and spirit) with each phase may help regulate hormones and reduce symptoms. This is where you can empower yourself by choosing to get curious about your cycle, ditching what society tells you it is, and investigating what works for your body instead of dreading or shaming your period.

IS YOUR LUTEAL PHASE SHORTER THAN AVERAGE?

Some women experience shorter luteal phases (fewer than 10 days). This can be caused by a number of reasons, but one main cause is a low level of progesterone. When your body doesn't create enough progesterone, the luteal phase ends prematurely. The cause of low progesterone could be health conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome, thyroid disorders, excessive exercise, stress, and more. Aside from playing a key role in the menstrual cycle, progesterone is an important hormone in overall health: It helps create strong bones, supports heart health, increases quality of sleep, and promotes feelings of peace and calm.

To test if your luteal phase is on the shorter side, track the number of days between ovulation (see how to determine

when you ovulate) and the start of your next period (a day of full bleeding, not spotting). Science says that 12 days or more is ideal, but this varies from person to person. If your luteal phase is fewer than 10 days, you may have low progesterone. That being said, everyone's body is different! Because of this, it's important to check in with how you feel and speak with your doctor if you're concerned or want to learn more. A functional medicine doctor or obstetrician can help you with treatments to lengthen your luteal phase.

FOODS FOR NOURISHMENT

During the luteal phase, your main goals are to support progesterone production, reduce fluid retention, and support the elimination of toxins and excess estrogen through the intestines to reduce any PMS symptoms that may creep up at the end of your cycle.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Listening to your body when it comes to ideal cooking methods. Do you want something warm and cozy? Or maybe a bowl of lightly steamed veggies with your favorite protein? This phase is all about feeling nourished and nurtured.
- Consuming whole grains and complex carbohydrates, vitamin B_6, magnesium, calcium, and soluble fiber daily.

Whole Grains and Complex Carbohydrates

You may notice an increase in overall appetite and in cravings for carbohydrates (most often in the form of starches and sweets) during this phase. This can partially be explained by your body's need for extra B vitamins (found in whole grains and complex carbohydrates) for progesterone production. Plus, munching on these complex carbohydrates supports natural production of serotonin, the feel-good neurotransmitter, which for some women decreases during the luteal phase. To get your daily fix of B vitamins, reach for whole grains and complex carbohydrates like oats, brown rice, millet, corn, buckwheat, quinoa, sweet potatoes, apples, berries, cruciferous vegetables, beans, and leafy greens.

ABOVE: Pumpkin–Chocolate Chip Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches

RECIPES FOR WHOLE GRAINS AND COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

- *Maple-Apple Breakfast Crisp*
- *Raspberry-Lavender-Lemon Chia Jam*

- *Spinach and Cheddar Quiche with Brown Rice Crust*
- *Cornmeal Waffles with Lemon-Blueberry Compote*
- *"Everything" Sweet Potato Toast with Poached Eggs*
- *Pumpkin–Cinnamon Swirl Muffins*
- *Chili-Mango Fried Brown Rice Bowl with Sesame Seeds*
- *Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup*
- *Crunchy Thai Soba Noodle Salad with Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce*
- *Turmeric-Ginger Parsnip Bowl*
- *Creamed Spinach*
- *White Bean and Sage Dip*
- *Nacho Popcorn*

Vitamin B_6

While we emphasize all B vitamins during the luteal phase to support progesterone production, vitamin B_6 deserves a double take. Not only is it essential for progesterone synthesis, but it also helps reduce inflammation and detoxify excess estrogen, making it absolutely vital in combating PMS. Foods rich in vitamin B_6 include avocado, bananas, beef, chicken, garlic, salmon, spinach, sweet potatoes, and tuna.

If you're experiencing perimenopause, it's especially important to reach for foods rich in vitamin B_6. During this time, your progesterone decreases as more and more cycles become anovulatory. Without much progesterone, you are

more susceptible to PMS symptoms and heavy, painful periods. Foods high in vitamin B_6 can support progesterone production while also boosting dopamine and serotonin levels.

RECIPES FOR VITAMIN B_6

- *Spinach and Cheddar Quiche with Brown Rice Crust*
- *Cornmeal Waffles with Lemon-Blueberry Compote*
- *"Everything" Sweet Potato Toast with Poached Eggs*
- *Pumpkin–Cinnamon Swirl Muffins*
- *Chili-Mango Fried Brown Rice Bowl with Sesame Seeds*
- *Sausage with Apples and Bok Choy*
- *Beef Burger with Mushrooms and Caramelized Red Onions*
- *Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup*
- *Turmeric-Ginger Parsnip Bowl*
- *Creamed Spinach*
- *Pumpkin–Chocolate Chip Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches*

Magnesium and Calcium

Foods rich in magnesium and calcium can help reduce fluid retention (which is linked to bloating), constipation, and headaches — all common PMS symptoms. On top of that, magnesium may increase progesterone levels by supporting the health of the corpus luteum. Foods rich in magnesium and calcium include apricots, beans, brown rice, cacao, cheddar

cheese, kelp, leafy greens, molasses, nuts, seaweeds, sesame seeds, and tofu.

RECIPES FOR MAGNESIUM AND CALCIUM

- *Spinach and Cheddar Quiche with Brown Rice Crust*
- *Cornmeal Waffles with Lemon-Blueberry Compote*
- *Chili-Mango Fried Brown Rice Bowl with Sesame Seeds*
- *Sausage with Apples and Bok Choy*
- *Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup*
- *Crunchy Thai Soba Noodle Salad with Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce*
- *Turmeric-Ginger Parsnip Bowl*
- *Creamed Spinach*
- *White Bean and Sage Dip*
- Almond Butter–Dark Chocolate Cups
- *Pumpkin–Chocolate Chip Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches*
- *Dark Chocolate Cashew Bark with Fresh Mint*
- *Red Raspberry–Mint Tea*

Soluble Fiber

While all types of fiber support overall health, soluble fiber is especially important during the luteal phase. Soluble fibers are those found in plants that are water soluble. In the body, these fibers form a gel-like substance that slows digestion, which is especially beneficial for those who struggle with diarrhea.

(*Note:* If you find yourself experiencing constipation as your period gets closer, try easing up on soluble fiber, as it further slows digestion.)

Soluble fibers are also noted for their ability to bind cholesterol, toxins, and excess estrogen and eliminate them through the bowels. After you've supported your liver detoxification pathways during ovulation, it is vital to ensure that your bowels continue to eliminate properly during the luteal phase. You'll find high amounts of soluble fiber in foods such as apples, beans, berries, chia seeds, citrus, flaxseed, oats, and psyllium.

RECIPES FOR SOLUBLE FIBER

- *Maple-Apple Breakfast Crisp*
- *Raspberry-Lavender-Lemon Chia Jam*
- *Cornmeal Waffles with Lemon-Blueberry Compote*
- *Pumpkin–Cinnamon Swirl Muffins*
- *Chili-Mango Fried Brown Rice Bowl with Sesame Seeds*
- *Sausage with Apples and Bok Choy*
- *Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup*
- *Crunchy Thai Soba Noodle Salad with Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce*
- *Turmeric-Ginger Parsnip Bowl*
- *White Bean and Sage Dip*
- *Pumpkin–Chocolate Chip Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches*

BREAKFAST

Maple-Apple Breakfast Crisp

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

During the cooler mornings of autumn, it's nice to wake up with something warm and sweet. This breakfast crisp is the perfect way to honor the beginning of big transitions, whether they be physical or emotional. Oats and apples both offer B vitamins to support progesterone production, as well as high amounts of soluble fiber to support digestion and eliminate toxins. Choose a mix of both tart and sweet apples, such as Granny Smith and Fuji.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** ¼ cups rolled oats
- ½ cup coconut oil, softened to room temperature
- ⅓ cup plus **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- ⅓ cup chopped pecans
- ¼ cup unsalted raw sunflower seeds
- ¼ cup almond flour
- Zest of ½ lemon
- **5** cups peeled and diced apples (about 4 medium tart and sweet apples)

- **1** tablespoon lemon juice
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **½** teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch of kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. To make the topping, combine the oats, oil, ⅓ cup of maple syrup, pecans, sunflower seeds, flour, and lemon zest in a medium mixing bowl and stir well. Set aside while making the filling to allow the oats to absorb some liquid.
3. To make the filling, combine the apples, lemon juice, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, and remaining 2 tablespoons maple syrup in a large mixing bowl and stir well. Transfer the mixture to a 9- by 13-inch baking pan and spread evenly.
4. Gently spread the topping over the apple filling in an even layer. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the apples are tender and the topping is golden brown. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving. Store leftovers by placing a paper towel over the crisp, then covering with foil or a tight-fitting lid. Leftovers will keep in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days.

NEST

Research shows that the hormones progesterone and prolactin are highest during the luteal phase, which can cause you to feel the longing to nest. You may begin to crave soft textures and soothing smells, and you may need to purge items from your home that no longer feel aligned with your desires. Allow these urges. Your body, mind, and spirit move in their own rhythm and their own season.

As you continue to refine your preferences and align your home with your desires, have grace with your expectations, judgments, or ego-based stories and move with whatever feels good in your surroundings. When your menstrual phase arrives, you will have a sense of grounded pride thanks to the intent you've put into your space. Slowing down, caring for yourself, and feeding your soul isn't easy, but it's the most worthwhile process you can do for yourself and those around you.

BREAKFAST

Raspberry-Lavender-Lemon Chia Jam

Makes 2 cups
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Idle time: 3–4 hours

Homemade jam (especially when paired with thick bread) is good for the soul. Thanks to the gel-forming powers of raspberries and chia seeds, this jam is also good for slowing down digestion and for binding and eliminating toxins and excess hormones. Raspberries contain another powerful antioxidant known as resveratrol, which has been shown to promote heart health and help reduce plaque buildup in the arteries. Time to jam.

INGREDIENTS

- **3** cups raspberries, fresh or frozen
- **1/4** cup water
- **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **1** tablespoon dried lavender flowers

- **2** teaspoons lemon juice
- **1½** teaspoons lemon zest
- **2** tablespoons chia seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the raspberries and water in a small saucepan and place over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a boil, using a wooden spoon to stir frequently and mash the berries, then reduce the heat to low. Add the maple syrup, lavender, lemon juice, and lemon zest, and stir well. Simmer for 10 minutes, uncovered, stirring occasionally.
2. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the chia seeds. Pour the jam into a glass jar or container and let cool to room temperature before sealing with a lid and placing in the refrigerator. Chill for 3 to 4 hours before serving to allow the jam to set. The jam will keep in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

BREAKFAST

Spinach and Cheddar Quiche with Brown Rice Crust

Makes 2–4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 65 minutes

This quiche, with its brown rice crust, is a simple and nourishing way to add flair to the first (or last!) meal of the day. Eggs from pasture-raised chickens are a powerhouse of omega-3 fatty acids, which studies have shown can decrease the severity of painful cramps and decrease overall inflammation. Brown rice, spinach, and cheddar cheese give this quiche a boost of magnesium and calcium to ease bloating, headaches, and constipation.

INGREDIENTS

- **½** cup brown rice
- **1** cup vegetable broth
- **2** teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **¾** teaspoon kosher salt
- **8** large eggs
- **1½** cups chopped fresh spinach

- ½ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- ⅓ cup diced yellow onion
- ¼ cup heavy whipping cream (or dairy-free milk)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the rice and broth in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed. Alternatively, combine the rice and broth in a rice cooker and cook according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F (180°C). Grease a 9-inch pie dish with 1 teaspoon of the oil.
3. Add the remaining 1 teaspoon olive oil and ¼ teaspoon of the salt to the cooked rice and stir well to combine. Transfer the rice to the pie dish, spreading it in an even layer along the bottom and ¼ inch up the sides of the dish. Press firmly with a spatula to form a crust.
4. Bake the crust for 10 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, whisk together the eggs, spinach, cheese, onion, cream, garlic, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt in a large mixing bowl until well combined. Pour the egg filling over the crust.

6. Return the pie pan to the oven and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes, then slice and serve. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

RITUAL

GROUND INTO GRATITUDE

With your estrogen and progesterone levels still on the rise at the beginning of this phase, you may feel the call to roar under the sun with your friends and loved ones. Come the second half of the luteal phase and into menstruation, you may feel less inclined to be social, so answer that call when it arrives. And when you begin to draw inward, give gratitude for that, too — this can help ease the slight weariness or discomfort a change of season may bring. Practicing gratitude has been found to decrease inflammation in the body and activate the part of our nervous system that supports our “rest and digest” process.

Keeping a gratitude journal is a simple and easy way to give thanks for your life. There are so many notions of how to keep a gratitude journal, but the truth is, there is no right or wrong way to be grateful. You can keep track of three things a day that you feel grateful for, or write out an entire page. Or you can focus on one subject at a time —

for example, writing three reasons you're grateful for your partner or three reasons you're thankful for nature. Going into detail can expand on that abundant feeling of gratitude. Or maybe you want to remember the small things you're grateful for as well — oat milk, the skin you're in, cotton-candy sunsets. Soak up the sun and then return to your hearth, where you'll find warmth and solitude for the remainder of fall.

BREAKFAST

Cornmeal Waffles with Lemon-Blueberry Compote

Makes 4 waffles

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

These waffles are seriously nutritious and delicious. Cornmeal adds complex carbohydrates, magnesium, and soluble fiber for support during the luteal phase. Lemons offer a bright burst of flavor and a dose of vitamin B_6 , while the blueberries provide another rich source of soluble fiber.

COMPOTE

- **2** cups blueberries, fresh or frozen
- **2** tablespoons pure maple syrup
- **4** teaspoons lemon juice

WAFFLES

- **2** tablespoons coconut oil, melted, plus more for greasing the waffle iron
- **⅔** cup medium-ground cornmeal
- **⅓** cup all-purpose gluten-free baking flour
- **1** tablespoon baking powder
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅔** cup unsweetened almond milk
- **1** egg
- **2** teaspoons coconut sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the compote, combine the blueberries, maple syrup, and lemon juice in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Bring to a boil, smashing the blueberries with a wooden spoon, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. While the compote simmers, preheat a waffle iron and grease it with a bit of oil.
3. To make the waffles, whisk together the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and salt in a large mixing bowl until just combined.
4. Whisk together the almond milk, egg, sugar, and the 2 tablespoons oil in a small bowl until combined. Pour the egg

mixture into the cornmeal mixture and whisk until just incorporated, being careful not to overmix.

5. Pour 1/2 cup of the batter into the hot waffle iron and cook to your desired crispness, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer the cooked waffle to a plate and repeat with the remaining batter. Serve the waffles immediately and top with the hot compote. Store leftover waffles in the freezer for up to 6 months and leftover compote in an airtight container in the refrigerator for about 1 week.

BREAKFAST

“Everything” Sweet Potato Toast with Poached Eggs

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

This toast is a fresh take on breakfast (or snack time), and with complex carb–rich sweet potatoes and mineral-rich sesame seeds, it’s as satisfying for your belly as it is for your soul.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** large sweet potato, cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices
- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **2** teaspoons poppy seeds
- **2** teaspoons dried minced onion
- **2** teaspoons dried minced garlic
- **2** teaspoons fennel seeds
- **1** teaspoon white sesame seeds
- **1** teaspoon black sesame seeds
- **4** eggs

- **1** tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- Hummus (your favorite flavor)
- *For serving:* **2** lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Lay the sweet potato slices on a small baking sheet, leaving about 1 inch of space between slices. Brush the slices with the oil and sprinkle on ¼ teaspoon of the salt.
3. Bake the sweet potatoes for 20 minutes, flipping halfway through, or until easily pierced with a fork and golden on the edges.
4. To make the everything seasoning, whisk together the poppy seeds, minced onion, minced garlic, fennel seeds, white and black sesame seeds, and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Set aside.
5. Crack the eggs into four small ramekins or cups. Add about 1 inch of water to a small saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Stir in the vinegar and swirl the water in one direction to create a small whirlpool. Gently pour 2 eggs into the water and poach for 3 minutes for a runny yolk. Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and transfer to a clean plate. Dab the eggs with a paper towel to remove excess water. Repeat with the remaining 2 eggs.

6. Spread 1 or 2 tablespoons of hummus on each baked sweet potato slice and top with a poached egg. Sprinkle generously with the everything seasoning and garnish with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice before serving. Best if eaten immediately.

BREAKFAST

Pumpkin–Cinnamon Swirl Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Besides being the icon for fall, pumpkins are full of soluble fiber and complex carbs, which help keep our digestive system balanced and support the production of progesterone and serotonin. Complete with cinnamon, which works as a blood sugar regulator, these muffins are perfect for any time of day (or season) — preferably paired with fuzzy socks.

INGREDIENTS

- **⅓** cup coconut oil, melted, plus more for the pan
- **2** teaspoons coconut sugar
- **3** teaspoons ground cinnamon
- **1½** cups all-purpose gluten-free baking flour
- **¾** teaspoon baking soda
- **½** teaspoon baking powder
- **½** teaspoon ground nutmeg
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt

- **1/4** teaspoon ground ginger
- **1** cup pure pumpkin purée (not pumpkin pie filling)
- **3/4** cup brown sugar
- **1/2** cup plain Greek yogurt (dairy-free if desired)
- **1** large egg
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Prepare a muffin pan by greasing with coconut oil or lining with paper cups.
2. Combine the coconut sugar and 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Using a sifter or fine-mesh strainer, sift the flour with the remaining 2 teaspoons cinnamon and the baking soda, baking powder, nutmeg, salt, and ginger into a large mixing bowl. Mix well.
4. Whisk together the pumpkin, brown sugar, yogurt, egg, vanilla, and 1/3 cup melted oil in a medium mixing bowl until smooth. Add to the flour mixture and mix with a spatula until just combined, being careful not to overmix (overmixing will result in dense, dry muffins).
5. Using a 1/4-cup measure, scoop the batter into the prepared muffin cups. Sprinkle 1/4 teaspoon of the reserved cinnamon sugar onto each muffin.

6. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before serving warm. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for 2 to 3 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Chili-Mango Fried Brown Rice Bowl with Sesame Seeds

Makes 4–6 servings
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 50 minutes
Idle time: 1 hour

Skip the takeout and cozy up with this big, nourishing sweet and savory bowl. Mangoes boast high levels of vitamin A, magnesium, vitamin B_6, and soluble fiber, and sesame seeds add magnesium, calcium, and protein. Hello, friend. Meet your new comfort food go-to.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 ½** cups brown rice
- **3** cups vegetable or chicken broth
- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **2** medium mangoes, peeled and diced

- **1** medium red bell pepper, sliced
- **4** scallions, thinly sliced
- **2** tablespoons liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **1** tablespoon red pepper flakes
- **4** eggs
- **¼** cup sesame seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the rice and broth in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed. Alternatively, combine the rice and broth in a rice cooker and cook according to the manufacturer's directions. Transfer the cooked rice to a large bowl and chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour or overnight.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mangoes, bell pepper, and scallions, and sauté until lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the chilled rice, liquid aminos, and pepper flakes, and sauté for 5 minutes, mixing occasionally.
3. Crack the eggs into a small bowl and whisk until uniform in color. Move the rice mixture to one side of the saucepan and gently pour the eggs into the other side. Cook, stirring frequently with a silicone spatula, until the eggs begin to come together, 3 to 4 minutes. Combine the eggs with the

rice mixture and cook for 1 minute longer. Remove from the heat, stir in sesame seeds, and serve immediately. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Sausage with Apples and Bok Choy

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

This dish is a party in your mouth, with savory notes from the sausage, crunch from the bok choy, and a burst of sweet from the juicy apples. Bok choy is a cruciferous vegetable. It adds calcium and vitamin B_6, and as we know from the ovulation chapter, it also supports liver detoxification of estrogen. That, combined with the wealth of soluble fiber from the apples, makes this dish a luteal phase staple.

INGREDIENTS

- **½** teaspoon avocado oil
- **½** cup diced yellow onion
- **3** garlic cloves, minced
- **3–4** heads baby bok choy, sliced

- **1** medium sweet apple (such as Fuji or Gala), cored and diced
- **1** tablespoon liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **1** teaspoon pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon rice vinegar
- **½** teaspoon red pepper flakes
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **1** pound bulk mild pork or chicken sausage
- *For serving (optional):* your favorite grain or scrambled eggs

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté until fragrant and slightly translucent, 3 to 4 minutes. Toss in the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds longer. Add the bok choy and apples, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Whisk together the liquid aminos, maple syrup, vinegar, pepper flakes, and salt in a small bowl. Add the sauce to the skillet and sauté for 1 minute. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl.
3. Place the sausage in the same skillet over medium-high heat. Using a wooden spoon, break the sausage into small pieces and cook, stirring frequently, until no longer pink, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the apple and bok choy mixture back to the skillet and stir to combine. Cook until warmed through, 4 to 5 minutes longer. Serve immediately with your favorite

grain or with scrambled eggs. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

LUNCH/DINNER

Beef Burger with Mushrooms and Caramelized Red Onions

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

Beef, mushrooms, and caramelized red onions make for an excellent burger combination, and they provide wonderful luteal phase support. Beef is well-known for its B vitamin content, especially vitamins B_{12} and B_6 , and it is also a great source of iron. Mushrooms and red onions add more B vitamins, along with selenium, zinc, and vitamin C.

INGREDIENTS

- **3** teaspoons avocado oil
- **½** medium red onion, thinly sliced
- **1** tablespoon unsalted butter
- **2** cups sliced button or cremini mushrooms
- **1** pound ground beef
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** teaspoon liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- **4** hamburger buns or large romaine leaves, halved

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Warm 2 teaspoons of the oil in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring often, until they are caramelized (soft, rich in color, and a bit crispy on the edges), 30 to 35 minutes. Keep a close eye on them, as they burn easily. Remove from the heat and let cool.
2. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté, tossing the mushrooms every few minutes, until they are golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes.
3. Using your hands, thoroughly combine the ground beef, garlic, liquid aminos, and pepper in a medium mixing bowl. Divide into four portions and gently shape into patties about 4 inches across and 1 inch thick. Set the patties on a clean plate.
4. Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook the burgers until there is a nice brown crust underneath, 4 to 5 minutes. Flip and cook to your desired doneness, 3 to 5 minutes longer.
5. Assemble the burgers by placing them on the buns or lettuce leaves and generously topping with the mushrooms and caramelized onions. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

RITUAL

CHOOSE WARMTH

During the second half of the luteal phase, as you head into the winter climate of menstruation, your body yearns for gentler pleasures. You may find yourself wanting to prepare comfort dishes or purchasing that comforter you've been eyeing.

Beyond physical warmth, you can choose to surround yourself with mental and emotional warmth, taking extra care to talk to yourself with kindness. The thoughts you think have just as much of an effect on your body as a warm bath does, and they can be equally as supportive to your well-being as you head into menstruation — where you may possibly find yourself navigating challenging PMS symptoms, mood swings, and more. Now's the time to slow down, light a match, and warm up. Winter is coming.

LUNCH/DINNER

Chipotle–Black Bean Tortilla Soup

Makes 4–6 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Chipotle peppers, paprika, and cayenne add warmth and a burst of capsaicin (the compound responsible for the heat), which helps stimulate digestion. Tomatoes and black beans offer vitamin B_6 , which supports natural progesterone production, and black beans are chock-full of magnesium and soluble fiber. We strongly recommend whipping up a batch of this soup at any sign of a sore throat or fatigue, or just when you need a hug.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon avocado oil
- **½** medium yellow onion, diced
- **2** garlic cloves, minced
- **3** canned chipotle peppers with adobo sauce
- **1** cup diced tomatoes
- **2** teaspoons kosher salt
- **1** teaspoon ground cumin

- **½** teaspoon paprika
- **¼** teaspoon ground cayenne pepper, or less as desired
- **1** cup almond milk
- **2** cups chicken broth
- **3** cups cooked black beans
- **1½** cups corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- Juice of **½** lime
- Tortilla chips
- Toppings (optional): diced avocado, sliced scallions, and sour cream or plain yogurt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté until fragrant and softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds longer.
2. Add the chipotle peppers with adobo sauce and ⅔ cup of the diced tomatoes. Cook, stirring frequently, until warmed through, 2 to 3 minutes. Toss in the salt, cumin, paprika, and cayenne, and stir well. Turn off the heat.
3. Transfer the cooked vegetables to a high-powered blender and add the almond milk. Blend until smooth, about 1 minute.
4. Return the mixture to the pot and heat over medium-low heat. Pour in the broth, beans, corn, and remaining ⅓ cup diced tomatoes, and mix well. Simmer for 10 minutes,

stirring occasionally. Squeeze in the lime juice, stir, and taste. Adjust the seasonings as needed.

5. Ladle the soup into bowls and top with crushed tortilla chips. Add diced avocado, sliced scallions, and/or a dollop of sour cream or yogurt, if desired. Store leftover soup separately from the toppings in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days, or freeze for up to 6 months.

RITUAL

SAY NO

Society may tell you that “no” requires explanation and convincing. We’re here to tell you that “no” is a complete sentence. As progesterone and estrogen begin their decline during the second half of the luteal phase, your energy may decline, too. This offers you the opportunity to stand in your power and say yes to what your body and soul really need — space and introversion.

Clearing your social calendar, practicing saying no, and turning inward are all forms of self-care — but they are far from the only ones. These practices will differ from person to person and are what make the “self” in self-care so fervently unique. Use this time to strengthen your integrity muscle and say yes only to things that nourish you, make you happy, and reflect how you honestly feel — which may turn out to be nothing at all during this phase.

LUNCH/DINNER

Crunchy Thai Soba Noodle Salad with Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce

Makes 6–8 servings

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

This dish is as comforting, fun, and dynamic as it sounds — and it takes only 30 minutes to create from start to finish. Bite-size soba noodles and purple cabbage make for a complex carbohydrate base and are elevated by magnesium- and calcium-rich chickpeas and sesame seeds. The Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce is bright and grounding.

SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- **¼** pound soba noodles
- **2½** cups shredded purple cabbage
- **2** medium carrots, shredded
- **1½** cups cooked chickpeas
- **4** scallions, thinly sliced
- **¼** cup chopped fresh cilantro
- **2** tablespoons sesame seeds

SAUCE

- ½ cup salted cashew butter
- **6** tablespoons water
- **1** tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- **1** tablespoon liquid aminos or coconut aminos
- **2** teaspoons lime juice
- **2** teaspoons chili garlic sauce

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the salad, bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil and cook the noodles according to the package directions. Remove from the heat, strain, and return to the saucepan to cool. Using a clean pair of kitchen scissors, cut the noodles into smaller pieces, 2 to 3 inches long.
2. Combine the cabbage, carrots, chickpeas, scallions, cilantro, and sesame seeds in a large mixing bowl and mix well. Add the cut noodles and mix again.
3. To make the sauce, whisk together the cashew butter, water, ginger, liquid aminos, lime juice, and chili garlic sauce in a small bowl until smooth. Taste and adjust the flavors as needed.
4. To serve, pour about half of the sauce over the salad (saving the rest to serve on the side) and stir to combine. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve cold. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

RITUAL

EMBRACE DUALITY

The luteal phase is all about the in-between — duality, saying goodbye, letting things die, and starting anew. This phase is not an easy one for many, both physically and emotionally. As your hormones dip, preparing the uterine lining to shed, you may feel exhausted, restless, uncomfortable, or spiritually hungry. That hunger, however, may not be one that's easily fed, which in turn creates more frustration.

This is fall. It asks you to show up as you are, knowing that you can't stay the same where you're headed and understanding that you won't be the same when spring arrives. In a way, you mourn what was to make space for what will be — you slip into an unknown world carrying nothing but yourself. That vulnerability and duality is a gift, and one that is primarily special to the luteal phase.

As hard as it may feel, release and soften into this space through self-awareness and make time for the nourishing things you need. Isolation, rest, and a releasing of emotions are all signposts that you're well on your way into the forest of autumn.

LUNCH/DINNER

Turmeric-Ginger Parsnip Bowl

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 50 minutes

Turmeric is a spice warrior and incredibly versatile. It adds a peppery taste and golden hue to this dish, and it offers continued support to the liver by decreasing free radical damage and increasing glutathione production (necessary for detoxification). Coupled with ginger, which contains anti-inflammatory compounds known as gingerols, this bowl packs a punch. It may help reduce inflammation and the severity of PMS symptoms.

INGREDIENTS

- **1½** cups brown rice
- **3** cups vegetable broth
- **1** small crown broccoli, chopped into florets
- **2** medium carrots, diced
- **1** medium parsnip, diced
- **2** tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- **2** tablespoons avocado oil
- **4** garlic cloves, minced
- **2** teaspoons paprika

- **1½** teaspoons ground turmeric
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **¼** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- **1½** cups cooked chickpeas
- **1** cup packed fresh spinach, roughly chopped
- Sauce (optional): Ginger–Cashew Butter Sauce, Spicy Peanut Sauce, or Lemon-Garlic Tahini Sauce
- Toppings (optional): sliced scallions, sesame seeds, and/or bean sprouts

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the rice and broth in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed. Alternatively, combine the rice and broth in a rice cooker and cook according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
3. Toss together the broccoli, carrots, parsnip, ginger, oil, garlic, paprika, turmeric, salt, and pepper in a large mixing bowl until well combined. Spread in an even layer on a large baking sheet.
4. Bake the vegetables for 15 to 20 minutes, tossing them halfway through, or until the parsnips and carrots are fork-tender.

5. Transfer the roasted vegetables to a large bowl. Add the chickpeas and spinach, and mix well. Add sauce, if using, and garnish with your chosen toppings, if desired. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days.

RITUAL

JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR WIDE-AWAKE HOURS

Insomnia, a common symptom of perimenopause, can feel frustrating and jarring, but it needn't be. If we shift our mindset and embrace this newfound time, we may find acceptance and even enjoyment. One of our favorite things to do when we find free pockets of time is to join the quiet and write. Through journaling, we can discover what we need, what we want, and where we block ourselves. There are many different forms of journaling. We tend to lean toward short yet impactful prompts that ground us in the moment and uncover what we couldn't previously see. Here are a few of our favorites:

- Name your current feeling.
- How is your feeling inspiring you, or what is it telling you that you need to know?
- How can you honor this emotion, or how can you honor yourself today?

- What about this moment can you carry with you throughout the day?

SIDE DISH

Creamed Spinach

Makes 4 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

This classic gets a wholesome spin, thanks to coconut milk and chickpea flour. Spinach is such a versatile leafy green, and it is supportive during the luteal phase because it's a rich source of vitamin B_6 and magnesium. Pair it with your favorite protein or add it to the "Everything" Sweet Potato Toast with Poached Eggs or the Beef Burger with Mushrooms and Caramelized Red Onions.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** tablespoons unsalted butter
- **⅔** cup minced yellow onion
- **4** garlic cloves, minced
- **1** cup canned, full-fat coconut milk
- **½** cup coconut cream
- **2** tablespoons chickpea flour
- **2** teaspoons lemon juice
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** teaspoon ground nutmeg

- **6** cups fresh baby spinach

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Melt the butter in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté, stirring occasionally, until softened and fragrant, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.
2. Reduce the heat to low and whisk in the coconut milk, coconut cream, and chickpea flour. Simmer, whisking frequently, until the sauce has thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice, salt, and nutmeg. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking.
3. Fold the spinach into the sauce. Cook until the spinach has wilted and everything is incorporated, 2 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and serve immediately. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for 2 to 3 days.

SNACK

White Bean and Sage Dip

Makes about 1 ½ cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

Serve this savory dip on a crusty baguette or homemade sourdough, or as a part of your next charcuterie board. Soluble fiber from the beans helps to keep us regular, feed our gut microbiome, and flush out toxins. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, substitute rosemary for the sage, as sage may dry up milk supply during lactation.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 ½** cups cooked navy beans
- **1** tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- **1** tablespoon lemon juice
- **1** tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- **½** teaspoon red pepper flakes
- **¼** teaspoon garlic powder
- **¼** teaspoon kosher salt
- **⅛** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Combine the beans, oil, lemon juice, sage, pepper flakes, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a food processor and mix until

smooth, about 1 minute, scraping down the sides as needed with a spatula. Taste and adjust the seasonings as desired. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days.

SNACK

Nacho Popcorn

Makes about 4 cups

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

This whole-grain snack is quick, simple, and light, showcasing savory spices and nourishing your body with a bit of vitamin B_6 and iron, plus loads of fiber thanks to the popcorn.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** tablespoon coconut oil
- **¼** cup popcorn kernels
- **3** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- **3** tablespoons nutritional yeast
- **½** teaspoon kosher salt
- **½** teaspoon paprika
- **¼** teaspoon chile powder
- **¼** teaspoon ground cumin
- **¼** teaspoon onion powder
- **⅛** teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Melt the coconut oil in a large, deep pot with a tight-fitting lid over medium-high heat. Add 3 or 4 popcorn kernels and cover. Shake the pot frequently over the heat. Once the kernels have popped, remove them and add the remaining kernels. Cover the pot. Cook, shaking the pot frequently to avoid burning, until most of the kernels have popped (that is, when there are 3 seconds or more between pops), about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and transfer the popcorn to a large bowl. Drizzle the olive oil over the popcorn, stirring as you pour to distribute the oil evenly.

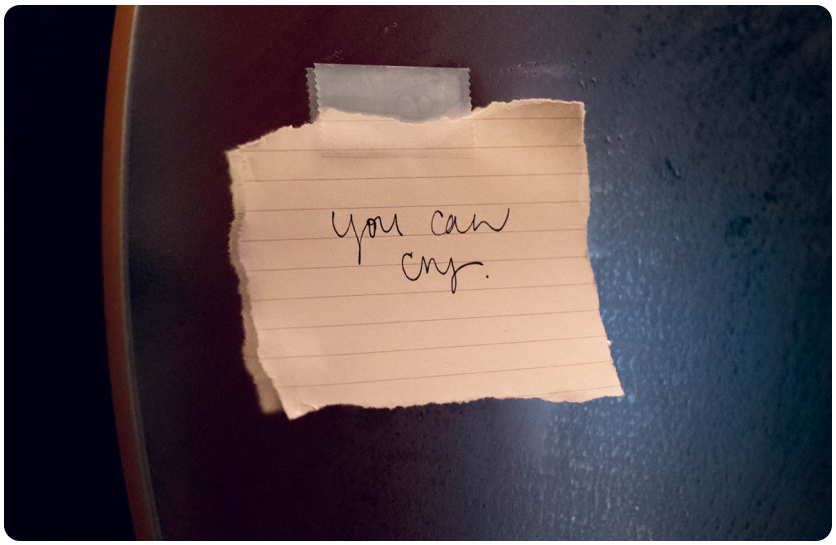
2. Whisk together the nutritional yeast, salt, paprika, chile powder, cumin, onion powder, and pepper in a small bowl. While stirring the popcorn, pour in the spice blend. Taste and adjust the seasonings as desired. Serve immediately. The popcorn is best if eaten fresh.

RITUAL

HAVE A GOOD CRY

Crying can be extremely cathartic during the second half of the luteal phase, when your serotonin and dopamine dip. With this drop in hormones comes a shift of mood, and you may find yourself undergoing a multitude of uncomfortable emotions. Embrace these feelings, understanding that this season gifts you with highly acute sensitivity so that you can work with yourself, your emotions, and your desires and not against them. The harder you resist your emotions, the more exhausted you

find yourself; alternatively, leaning into your emotions can set you up for a reflective, healing, and dynamic menstrual phase and beyond.



Crying is a hardwired, healthy way to move through an emotion. Write yourself a little note that reads “you can cry” to remind yourself to feel through and not block out emotions that are coming up. When you experience the urge to release, let go and take notice of how much lighter you feel afterward.

DESSERT

Almond Butter–Dark Chocolate Cups

Makes 12 large cups

Prep time: 25 minutes

These are unbelievably delicious. You'll love them. That's all. Oh, and in the off chance that you need another reason to make these, they provide magnesium, calcium, iron, and zinc, thanks to the chocolate and almond butter, and they may keep PMS symptoms at bay.

INGREDIENTS

- **1** (4-ounce) bar dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher)
- **2** tablespoons coconut oil
- **½** cup almond butter
- **3** tablespoons coconut flour

- **1** tablespoon pure maple syrup
- **1** teaspoon vanilla extract
- Flaky sea salt, for topping

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a muffin pan with 12 paper liners.
2. Break the chocolate bar into small pieces and place in a microwavable bowl. Add the coconut oil. Melt the chocolate in the microwave at high power for about 1 minute, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until smooth and shiny.
3. Pour 2 teaspoons of the melted chocolate into each muffin liner and place the pan in the freezer for 5 minutes, or until the chocolate mixture is hardened.
4. Combine the almond butter, flour, maple syrup, and vanilla in a small mixing bowl and mix until a dough forms. Form into small balls (about 1 ½ teaspoons of dough each) and flatten with your palm to about ¼-inch thickness.
5. Remove the muffin pan from the freezer and place one almond butter piece in the center of each cup. Spoon another 2 teaspoons of melted chocolate on top and return to the freezer for 10 minutes longer.
6. Remove the muffin pan from the freezer and sprinkle a pinch of salt on each cup. Return the pan to the freezer for 5 minutes longer, then enjoy. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

DESSERT

Pumpkin–Chocolate Chip Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches

Makes 10 sandwiches

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 18 minutes

It's always the right season for ice cream sandwiches. Thanks to the pumpkin, these cookies boast soluble fiber, complex carbohydrates, vitamin B_6, and zinc. Oat flour adds a helping of soluble fiber–rich whole grains to help with progesterone and serotonin production as well. These are a hit with kiddos (and adults, too).

INGREDIENTS

- **1 3/4** cups oat flour
- **1/4** cup coconut flour
- **1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- **1** teaspoon kosher salt
- **3/4** teaspoon baking powder
- **1/2** teaspoon baking soda
- **1/2** teaspoon ground nutmeg
- **1/4** teaspoon ground ginger
- **1/2** cup pumpkin purée (not pumpkin pie filling)
- **1/3** cup pure maple syrup
- **1/4** cup coconut oil, melted

- **3** tablespoons salted cashew butter
- **1 ½** teaspoons vanilla extract
- **⅓** cup dark chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- **⅓** cup raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas), roughly chopped
- **1** pint vanilla or chocolate ice cream (dairy or dairy-free)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. Set aside.
2. Whisk together the oat flour, coconut flour, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, and ginger in a large mixing bowl until combined.
3. Combine the pumpkin, maple syrup, oil, cashew butter, and vanilla in a medium mixing bowl and whisk until smooth. Pour into the flour mixture and stir with a spatula until just combined (overmixing results in dense cookies). Gently fold in the chocolate chips and pumpkin seeds.
4. Scoop out about 2 tablespoons of the dough and roll it between your hands to form a ball. Place on a prepared baking sheet. Repeat until you have 20 balls (add any extra dough to your smallest cookies), placing them about 2 inches apart on the baking sheets. Using the palm of your hand, flatten the cookies to ¼-inch thickness.

5. Bake the cookies for 18 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown. Transfer the cookies to a wire rack and cool for about 15 minutes.

6. Add 3 tablespoons of ice cream to the flat side of a cookie and gently place another cookie on top, flat-side down. Gently press on the sandwich with your palms. Repeat with the remaining cookies and ice cream and serve immediately. Store the ice cream and cookies separately. The cookies will keep in an airtight container at room temperature for about 1 week.

DESSERT

Dark Chocolate Cashew Bark with Fresh Mint

Makes about 15 pieces
Prep time: 15 minutes
Idle time: 30 minutes

Elevate your homemade treat game with this decadent yet straightforward recipe. Bits of fresh mint add a cooling sensation and boast several medicinal properties, including mood enhancement, pain reduction, and digestive relief. Consuming peppermint may help relieve PMS-related digestive issues such as gas, bloating, and diarrhea that some experience as their period approaches. Cashew pieces provide a delightful crunch along with hormone-supportive fats, magnesium, iron, and zinc.

INGREDIENTS

- **8** ounces dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher), chopped
- **2** tablespoons coconut oil
- **3** tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint
- **1/4** cup chopped unsalted raw cashews

- Flaky sea salt, for topping

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a small baking sheet with waxed paper or a silicone baking mat and set aside.
2. Place the chocolate and coconut oil in a microwavable bowl. Melt the chocolate in the microwave at high power for about 1 minute, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until smooth and shiny.
3. Add 2 tablespoons of the mint to the bowl and stir well. Carefully pour the chocolate onto the prepared baking sheet. Using a spatula, scrape all the chocolate from the bowl, then spread the chocolate to an even ¼-inch thickness.
4. Evenly sprinkle the chopped cashews, the remaining 1 tablespoon mint, and a pinch of salt over the chocolate. Transfer to the refrigerator and chill for 30 minutes, or until set.
5. Remove the chocolate from the refrigerator and use the tip of a knife to break the bark into pieces. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

DRINK

Red Raspberry–Mint Tea

Makes 1 serving

Prep time: 5 minutes

Idle time: 10–15 minutes

Tea drinking is a big ritual in our households for the simple warmth and serenity it brings to our days. A watched kettle never boils, so we soften our gaze on the weather outside or listen to early-morning sounds of our puppies snoring in their sleep. It offers us a chance to be present in the beginning, middle, or end of our days (and sometimes all three). Red raspberry leaf tones the tissues of the uterus, helping to regulate blood flow. Research suggests that inhaling volatile, evaporative peppermint oils relaxes muscles as well as calms the mind. Next stop: relaxation station.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** teaspoons finely chopped fresh peppermint leaves (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- **1** tablespoon dried red raspberry leaves
- **1** cup water
- Honey, to taste (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the peppermint leaves and dried red raspberry leaves in a mug. Bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan or kettle over high heat. Let the water cool for 1 to 2 minutes, then pour into the mug. Cover and let the tea steep for 10 to 15 minutes (the longer it steeps, the stronger the tea).
2. Pour the tea through a fine-mesh strainer into another mug, discarding the herbs. Stir in honey, if using. Enjoy hot or pour over ice. Make sure to inhale the peppermint volatile oils as you sip!

DRINK

Vanilla-Rose-Chasteberry Tea

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 5 minutes

Idle time: 10 minutes

Roses aren't just for beautifying your space; research shows that breathing in the volatile oils and consuming rose hips (the fruit from the rose plant) can reduce your blood pressure, slow your respiratory rate, and enhance your mood. Plus, consuming rose may reduce symptoms of PMS, including cramps, anxiety, and stress. Chasteberry, also known as vitex, is known to increase progesterone production and help boost mood, reduce fluid retention, and relieve breast tenderness. Known side effects of having this feel-good tea on hand are friends coming over for cuddles to enjoy said feel-good tea with you. We'll take our chances.

INGREDIENTS

- **2** teaspoons dried rose hips
- **1** teaspoon whole dried chasteberries, crushed with a mortar and pestle or grinder
- **1** teaspoon dried hibiscus flowers
- **2** cups water
- **¼** teaspoon vanilla extract

- **½–1** teaspoon honey, depending on preference

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the rose hips, chasteberries, and hibiscus flowers in a mug. Bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan or kettle over high heat. Let the water cool for 1 to 2 minutes, then pour into the mug. Cover and let the tea steep for 10 minutes.
2. Pour the tea through a fine-mesh strainer into another mug, discarding the herbs. Stir in the vanilla and honey. Enjoy hot or pour over ice.

SHINE ON

So here you are. You've traversed seasons of yourself, and you're standing firm in your skin. This is what self-love and eating for your whole being feel like. This is what empowerment looks like. This is what you radiate by choosing nourishment. Shine on.

Thank you for walking through each phase and season with us. And above all else, thank you for choosing you.

The world is better because of it.

Gratitudes

DEVON

Thank you to my parents, my sister, my in-laws, and the rest of my family for forever supporting what sets my heart on fire and instilling in me a grounded foundation and belief in myself. Thank you for reminding me to see myself through your eyes, listen to my heart, and go after what's important to my soul — while awake and alive and enjoying the journey on the way. I could not have done any of this without you.

Thank you to my husband for always grounding me and helping me talk through ideas, ruminations, fears, and freedoms. Thank you for being all-in for the next adventure, always, and for supporting my wellness by loving me fully, acknowledging my needs as though they were your own, and speaking in our language of humor and laughter. You're a gift. I love you.

Thank you to my son — my whole heart. Every day is exponentially better because you're in it. You are my most intimate teacher and inspiration. You are my biggest source of joy and my ultimate truth. Thank you for choosing me as your mama; it's my proudest and most rewarding role. I love you so much.

Thank you to my friends for always joining me in the adventure and reflecting back to me my true nature. You've shown me what it feels like to be seen and wholly accepted. Thank you for lots of late nights, simple joy, heart-to-hearts,

and a lot of love. Through you, I've learned that time and space are nothing more than an illusion when it comes to relationships — something I will never forget. Thank you for being a part of our family.

Thank you to Jenna; I could not have done this book without you. Your wisdom and knowledge, your incredibly vibrant heart, and how you pour yourself into everything you touch, bringing it to life — this is for you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Thank you to Kristina — you've brought Moon Cycle Bakery to life with your vision. It would not be what it is today without your talent and heart. Thank you for loving us unconditionally and for holding hands throughout every season life presents. I will be forever grateful for the serendipity that introduced us.

And to all of our customers and those whom I've connected with in some way — big or small — through my love for writing, through masterminds, events, collaborations, and through Moon Cycle Bakery, thank you. I am forever grateful for your spirit, your support, and your heart. None of this would be possible without you. I love you all.

JENNA

First and foremost, I wouldn't be writing these words if it weren't for you, Devon. I am forever grateful that our relationship began with a semester internship that has since blossomed into a deep, loving friendship and a journey of creation.

Thank you to my love, Issac, for being my most-trusted recipe tester, offering invaluable critiques beyond your inevitable "it's pretty good" initial review. Your unwavering love and support keep me going when I feel blinded by overwhelm.

Thank you to those who have instilled a love for cooking and recipe creation in my soul, including my friend Sarah Sullivan; my professors at the National University of Natural Medicine; and all of the toddlers and preschoolers I cook for, who have taught me tough love through hilarious recipe critiques.

Thank you to all those who tasted and reviewed recipes — your kind support is eternally appreciated.

Finally, thank you to my parents for the infinite love, support, and pep talks. I am proud to be your daughter.

FROM US BOTH

A tremendous thank-you from us both to everyone involved in the creation of our first cookbook. Thank you to Michelle Tessler for believing in us and our vision and guiding us to our publisher, Storey Publishing. Thank you to everyone at Storey Publishing for believing in us from the beginning — for pouring your hearts into our vision, prioritizing collaboration, elevating every nook and cranny, and helping us refine our book to our best creation. You cared about our vision from the start and have made this entire process a total dream. Thank you to Kristina Wunsch of Poppi Photography for your bright spirit, photography talent, and knack for all soulful things. This book wouldn't be the same without you. Thank you to

Brian Loftus and Tracy Porrino for your incredible help in making the photo shoot run seamlessly — we could not have done it without you two. Thank you to Devon's Aunt Randy and to Devon's family friend "Mama Jill" for acting as our antique dealers and graciously sharing your collected household items as props for our photo shoot. We could not have done it without you. Thank you to Brooke at Eleanor Ave Vintage for your amazing eye for beautiful, sustainably sourced goods that made our book feel like home. And thank you to Lapis jewelry for adorning us with handmade jewelry to celebrate makers and add magic to our shots. We love you all.

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Further Reading

The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods by Michael Murray, ND, and Joseph Pizzorno, ND

The First Forty Days: The Essential Art of Nourishing the New Mother by Heng Ou

Fix Your Period: Six Weeks to Banish Bloating, Conquer Cramps, Manage Moodiness, and Ignite Lasting Hormone Balance by Nicole Jardim

Know Your Endo: An Empowering Guide to Health & Hope with Endometriosis by Jessica Murnane

Nutritional Healing with Chinese Medicine by Ellen Goldsmith, MSOM, LAc, DipCH and Maya Klein, PhD

Period Repair Manual: Natural Treatment for Better Hormones and Better Periods by Lara Briden, ND

Taking Charge of Your Fertility: The Definitive Guide to Natural Birth Control, Pregnancy Achievement, and Reproductive Health by Toni Weschler, MPH

Woman Code: Perfect Your Cycle, Amplify Your Fertility, Supercharge Your Sex Drive, and Become a Power Source by Alisa Vitti, HHC

Menstrual Products We Recommend

Our favorite go-to products and brands that are both hormone and environmentally friendly:

- **MENSTRUAL CUPS** from The Honey Pot, DivaCup, Lunette, UltuCup, and Saalt
- **PERIOD UNDERWEAR** from Thinx, Dear Kate, and Harebrained
- **REUSABLE CLOTH PADS** from GladRags, Lunapads, and Sckoon
- **ORGANIC PADS AND TAMPONS** from L., Cora, Lola, and Blume

Metric Conversion Chart

TO CONVERT	TO	MULTIPLY
ounces	grams	ounces by 28.35
pounds	grams	pounds by 453.5
pounds	kilograms	pounds by 0.45
teaspoons	milliliters	teaspoons by 4.93
tablespoons	milliliters	tablespoons by 14.79
fluid ounces	milliliters	fluid ounces by 29.57
cups	milliliters	cups by 236.59
cups	liters	cups by 0.24
pints	milliliters	pints by 473.18
pints	liters	pints by 0.473
inches	millimeters	inches by 25.4
inches	centimeters	inches by 2.54
inches	meters	inches by 0.0254

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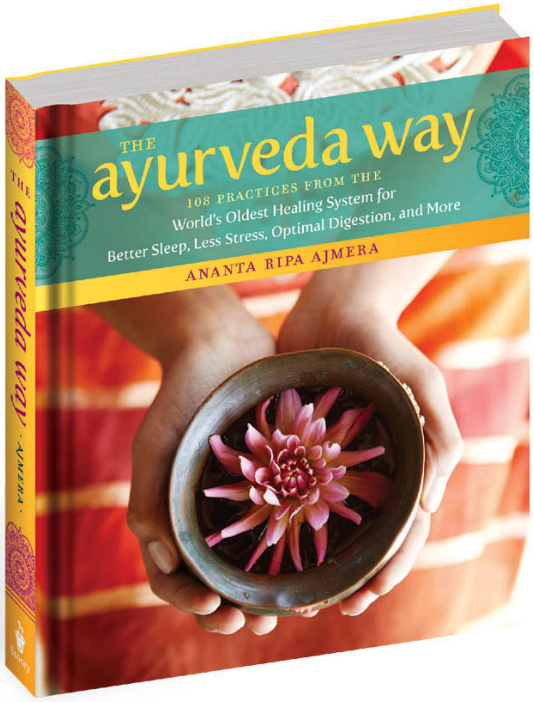

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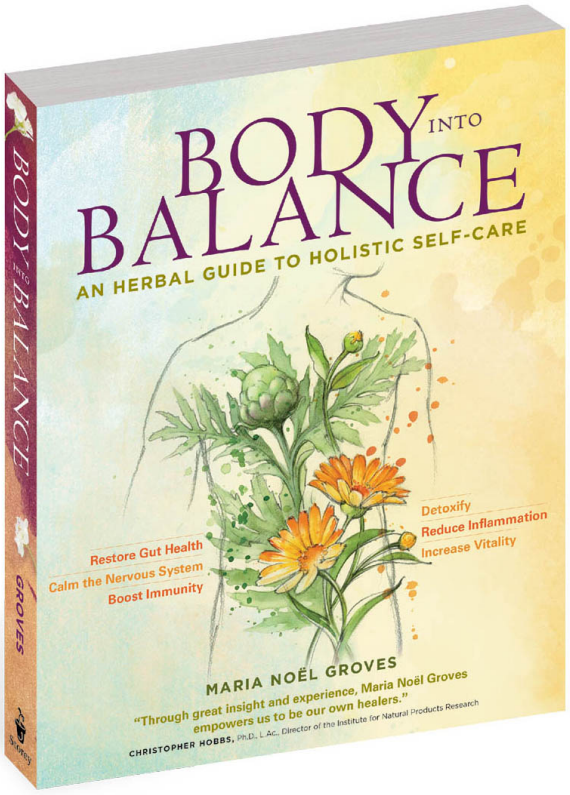
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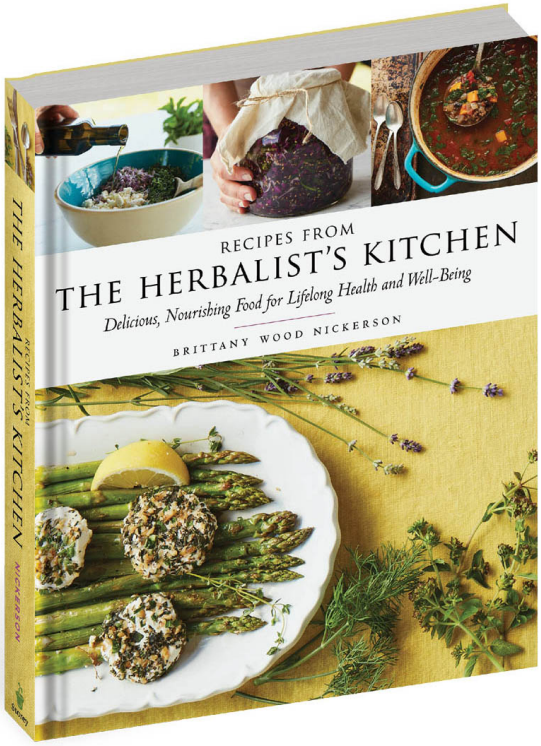
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